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'THE CHURCHMAN'S
Brief Manual
OF
BAPTISM.

“ We acknowledge that there are two sacraments properly so called, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord : for so many we see were delivered to us and consecrated by Christ, and approved by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and the Catholic Fathers.

“ And we say that Baptism is the sacrament of the remission of sins, and of that washing which we have in the blood of Christ, and that none are to be denied that sacrament who will profess the faith of Christ ; no not the Infants of Christians, because they are born in sin, and belong to the people of God.”—Jewel’s Apol. Ch. ii. § 12, 13.

“ If a Doctrine can be deduced from Scripture, it is as much as if it were in express words of Scripture.”—MANTON, Serm. on Heb. xi. 14, 15, 16.

THE
CHURCHMAN'S
Brief Manual
OF
BAPTISM,

IN FOUR PARTS,

CONTAINING

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| PART I.—MODE | } OF BAPTISM. |
| — II.—TIME | |
| — III.—EFFECTS | |
| — IV.—BAPTISMAL REGENERATION. | |

With concluding Observations.

BY THE
REV. CHARLES E. KENNAWAY, A.M.

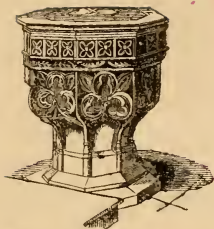
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HOLY BAPTISM.


IN token that thou shalt not fear
Christ crucified to own,
We print the cross upon thee here,
And stamp thee His alone.

In token that thou shalt not blush
To glory in His name,
We blazon here, upon thy front,
His glory, and His shame.


In token that thou shalt not flinch
Christ's conflict to maintain,
But 'neath His banner manfully
Firm at thy post remain.

In token that thou too shalt tread
The path He travell'd by,
Endure the cross, despise the shame,
And set thee down on high.

Thus outwardly and visibly
We seal thee for His own ;
And may the brow that wears His cross
Hereafter share His crown !



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P R E F A C E.

*Original
object in
writing
this Tract.* THIS Tract was taken in hand with the view of correcting the errors strongly held and industriously circulated in the Author's parish, by that sect of Christians ordinarily denominated Baptists. On this account the language as well as the statements in the earlier part are of studied and almost homely clearness.

In explaining the ordinance of Baptism as administered to infants, the Author was led to take some notice of the language of the Baptismal Service, and of the Catechism. He found that he could not notice some part without noticing the principal parts: and having often talked with many of his clerical brethren on the subject, and having found that the younger part of them were not always clear on the identity of the Abrahamic and the Christian covenants,

and the indissoluble connection between Circumcision and Baptism, he was led a little to extend his plan, and to say more than he had at first any intention of doing on the general subject.

It is a striking fact that so much obscurity should involve this as well as some other high subjects. This is no doubt for wise purposes. One single verse or one single line authoritatively delivered might have set this question and others

Reason must submit to faith in mysteries. at rest for ever. But such it has not seemed fit to the Allwise to give. There is abundance, however, for knowledge and for faith, and the rest is for charity.

We cannot expect to hold mysteries as we hold mathematical truths. We see only through a glass darkly (*ἐν ἀνυμῶνι*) *in an enigma*, an enigma which the knowledge of a brighter state will solve, but which cannot be unriddled here. It is the determination to break through the boundary line of obscurity that has caused such a variety of controversial evil—may I say?—of controversial woe; for it is woe and it is sorrow to see the Church divided, schism abounding, Christian men's spirits embittered, and broad

lines of demarcation running between those to whom on both sides, as to brethren, we ought to wish the apostolic benediction. The Author humbly trusts that nothing will be found in this Tract to militate against that Christian charity the want of which he so deeply deplures; and with this hope he commends it to the blessing of God the Father through Jesus Christ.

The Author would add that his attention was called at his first entering the ministry, by a very dear and valued relative,* to the admirable Treatise of Bishop Hopkins, (See 3rd and 4th Chap.). He acknowledges, with gratitude, the comfort which he at first derived, and which he has continued to enjoy, from its perusal. If it be wanting in any thing it is in the bringing out, which it scarcely does with sufficient clearness, the paternal character of God, as declared in this present Dispensation, which is *the Dispensation of the Spirit*. This, however, is the substratum of the view he takes.

* Hon. and Rev. Gerard Noel, Prebendary of Winchester



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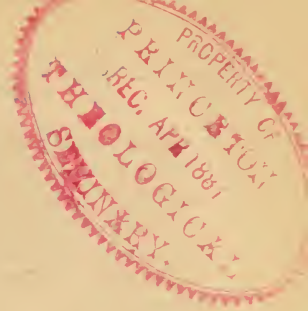
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CHAP. I.

“ Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.”—EZEK. xxxvi. 25.

Name of Baptist, its origin and abuse. IN commencing this tract it is right to state that the denomination of baptist is one to which the sect calling themselves by that name have no exclusive claim. They were called originally anabaptists, a name which indicated that they were *baptized a second time*; Menno Simon or Simonson, is often considered as the founder, or rather consolidater of the sect. He flourished in the fifteenth century, and was a native of Friesland.

The anabaptists (or baptists) of Munster, were a wild sect who held adult baptism to the exclusion of that of infants; and by their extravagancies greatly endangered the progress of the reformation.

If the term baptist implies the attaching of a peculiar degree of importance to the ordinance of baptism, the churchman is the true baptist; for he brings all his children in their infancy to baptism, whereas the (so called) baptist suffers his children to grow up or, should it so please God, to die and to be buried without any bap-

tismal blessing, as if they had no more claim to God's covenant blessings in Christ, than the heathen who had never heard that sacred name.

There are two points of difference between the church and the baptists. The first relates to the *mode* of baptism, the second to the *time* of baptism.

Mode of baptism. In regard to the first, the baptist says that no one ought to be baptized by pouring or sprinkling the water, but only by dipping or immersion. On the other hand it is the practice of the church to baptize, either by immersion or by sprinkling. It is often said by baptists that the baptism administered in the church cannot be good, because the minister only sprinkles the child. In answer to this we have simply to state that any member of the church may have his child baptized by dipping or immersion, if he pleases; and you may read the permission for this in what is called the rubric. The permission is as follows—(*“If they shall certify him (the Minister) that the child may well endure it, he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily. But if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it.”*) From reading this it is evident that the reason why the practice of sprinkling is so general, is *because of the care which the church takes of little infants* who could not so well bear being dipped into water in this *cold* climate, as they could in the *warm* country of Judæa, where christian baptism first began.*

* See further on this hereafter.

*Immer-
sion need-
less.* But the baptists lay great stress upon the dipping or immersion. To other christians it seems to matter very little whether the child be dipped or sprinkled: it is the *use* of *water* which is the great thing, because it is an emblem of the purifying power of grace, and it is meant to show us that just as water washes and cleanses the body, so does the grace of God through Jesus Christ, cleanse and purify the soul. So long then as water is reverently and discreetly used in baptism it is of very little importance whether it be poured on the child or the child be put into it. To dispute about this as if it were of great consequence is disputing about a mere “beggarly element.”

*Analogy
from the
Eucharist* But then the baptist says that he is certain from Scripture that the first christians were dipped, and not sprinkled, and that we ought, therefore, always to dip our children and never to sprinkle them.

In answer to this, it may be said in the first place, that if a person is particular in one thing he ought to be so likewise in others, which are of a similar nature; and if, therefore, he is so extremely particular in the administration of baptism, he ought to be equally so in that of the Lord's supper. Now we know that when the Lord instituted his sacramental supper, he ate it *lying on a couch*, and that the bread was *not leavened*. We ask the baptist then why he takes it *sitting* and with *leavened* bread? The only answer that can be given, and it is a very reasonable one, is this—that the great thing is to eat bread, which is a symbol of the blessed

Saviour's body, and to drink wine, which is a symbol of His blood ; and that whether we do it reclining or kneeling is of very little consequence. But then if the baptist is so particular in following what he thinks to be primitive practice in *one sacrament*, that of baptism, why should he be so careless whether he follows it in the other sacrament?

Analogy from the Sabbath. In addition to this the baptist may be asked why, if it be his principle to do nothing which is not *positively enjoined* in Scripture, he keeps the sabbath on the first day of the week instead of the seventh ; for there is no command in Scripture for the change. This difficulty has been felt by some baptists, and there is now or there was once a sect of them called sabbatarians, who keep the sabbath on the seventh day.*

Now the church when asked why she keeps the sabbath on the first day of the week instead of the seventh, answers well and wisely that she derives her custom from primitive antiquity ; that she does that which, as far as the Bible and Sacred History informs her, was done by the apostles and their immediate successors. This is sufficient for her ; she does not require a *direct* command. But the baptists cannot give the same answer in respect to the keeping of the sabbath, unless they allow that it may also be given in respect to the administration of baptism. "From Heb. xi. 14, and Matt. xxii.

* The late baptist, Dr. Stennett, was a sabbatarian, and used to keep the sabbath, so the writer is informed, both on Saturday and on Sunday.

31, 32, we learn (says Manton), the use of consequences. That doctrine which is not expressed in plain words of Scripture, yet is deduced thence by just consequences, is a Scripture doctrine. Our Lord, Matt. xxii. 31, 32, proves the resurrection by a consequence. The apostle, Heb. xi. 14, saith of the patriarchs, they declare (by their doings) plainly that they seek a country."

"In all controversies we hence learn that genuine deductions are not an obscure proof. The arians reject the consubstantiality of Christ and Trinity, because they are not Scripture words. The donatists called Augustine not the christian but the logician, because he argued from consequences in disputing with them. And so now-a-days in the controversy about infant baptism they require plain Scripture for it: we prove it by consequence that they are in covenant, and therefore they have a right to the seal of the covenant; they are disciples members of the church, and therefore have a right to the privileges of the church, and so for the sabbath."

"We must not instruct God how to set down his mind. The jews say if Christ had been the true Messiah he would have come in such a way as all his countrymen might have known him; so will men say, had this been the mind of God, it would have been more plainly and expressly revealed in Scripture. Thus will foolish men give laws to God. If a doctrine can be deduced from Scripture, it is as much as if it were in express words of Scripture." MANTON'S SERMON on Heb. xi. 14—16.

But we have, perhaps, said enough on this

point; and, undoubtedly, that which has been said is sufficient for christians in general, as it clearly shows how the principle on which the baptists rely in their unyielding demands for immersion, is neither sound nor reasonable. But it may be well for the reader's satisfaction to go farther, and to state the principal passages upon which the baptist grounds his assurance, that baptism ought to be by dipping or immersion alone.

*Arguments
adduced by
the Ana-
baptist
from
Scripture
for the ne-
cessity of
immersion.
Enon.
John iii,
23.*

It is said that John was baptizing in Enon because there was much water there. What was the use of this water? Was it only to dip, to baptize? So it is often thought, and often stated: but he who is better informed about the country of Judæa, knows that it is both hot and dry, and that it was always very important, that when crowds came together, they should have plenty of water for their cattle and beasts of burden. Moreover, Enon was one of the fords which the people crossed in going up to the Passover, and John made choice of it most probably in order to meet the greater number of people. It is not meant to be asserted that John the Baptist had no reference to baptizing, when he chose the fords of Enon, but that it is most probable that *one principal* reason was, that the cattle might be refreshed while the people were listening to his preaching.

Again, it is said, they "were baptized in Jordan." Now, suppose they stood ankle-deep

in the water, and that the water was poured over their heads while they were thus standing, would they not have been baptized *in* Jordan? And this is, perhaps, the way in which baptism was generally administered.

Math. iii. But it is objected that the Scripture tells us “Jesus went up out of the water,”—*Matth. iii. 16.* Now, any one who understands Greek, knows that this might be translated “went up *from* the water.” Suppose I were to tell a person to come up from the pond or the river, no one would think that he was in the water, but only by the water side, so that when it is said “Jesus went up from the water,” it may mean only from the water side.

Acts viii. Again, *Acts viii. 38, 39,* it is said, that Philip and the Eunuch went *into the water,* (v. 38), and that “*they came up out of the water.*” Here again we may observe, that the words might just as well be translated, “they went down *to* the water,” and not *into* the water, and “they came up *from* the water,” and not “*out of* the water.” These are the passages on which the baptists build so much, and it is evident that when examined they give him very little, if any, support at all. It may be observed, in addition, that we should gather from the expression, (*Mark iii. v. i.*) “He sat in the sea,” that Jesus actually was in the water, did not the context correct this. But it may be asked, may not the same figure be used in the passages relating to baptism?

Supported by the correct meaning of the original. Since writing this, I have consulted a very eminent Greek scholar, formerly Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge, on the passages to which I have alluded. I cannot forbear giving in his own very clear language his judgment on these passages. Acts viii. 38, 39, “*κατέβησαν εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ.*” I say, fearlessly, ought to be rendered “went down *to the water,*” and not *into* the water. The word *κατέβησαν* implies, that they were travelling upon higher ground, and if it was intended that they went no further than the brink of the water, yet still the expression *must have been* exactly what it is. Suppose that they had gone down to a city or a house, the expression would be, “*κατέβησαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν.*” or “*εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν,*” though they had not entered into either. In fact, had it been intended that they went *into* the water we should have had “*εἰσεβησαν εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ,*” as in the next chapter, v. 6, “*εἰσηλθε εἰς τὴν πόλιν.*” Upon the second point, I will not speak so confidently; but I have a strong impression that *ἐκ* and *ἀπὸ* might be used here convertibly. Of the third passage, “*ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος,*” there can be no doubt whatever that it implies only that they ascended from the hollow, through which the river ran.

Passages in which the word Baptize cannot mean immersion. I would here propose to the reader several tests, in which the word baptize, cannot mean dip, and on the contrary, must mean sprinkle. We are told, Acts ii, 41, that “they that gladly received the word were baptized, and

the same day there were added *unto them* three thousand souls." It may well be asked how it was possible to dip all these people at one time. It must be borne in mind that the apostles were poor men, in a small upper chamber in the heart of a city. Under these circumstances it seems next to impossible that they could dip all these three thousand ?

Matt. iii, Again, *Matt.* iii, 11, John prophesied
11. that Christ should baptize "with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." This prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and in reference to it we may ask the baptist again, whether the apostles were *dipped* in the Holy Ghost or *dipped* in fire: or whether the Holy Ghost and the fiery tongues did not rather come down upon them like dew or a shower ?

Acts viii, Again, when the Eunuch was baptized
37. by Philip, *Acts* viii, 37, 38, it seems very unreasonable to suppose that he would descend into the water and dip himself and his clothes, and then pursue his journey, (as he did *at once*), *without any change*.

Mark vii, 4. Again, *Mark* vii, 4. The washing
vii, 4. (baptism) of tables is mentioned. Can the baptist say that the tables were put into the water, or is it not reasonable to suppose that water was poured on them ?

Luke xi. Again, *Luke* xi. 38, it is said,—The
38. Pharisee marvelled that he (our blessed Lord), had not first washed before dinner. The word washed is literally *baptized*. Now it was the custom for guests to wash their hands before dinner, but not to dip themselves or bathe. It

is evident, therefore, that the word baptize means here simply to wash.

1 Cor. x. 2. Again, St. Paul tells the Jews (1 Cor. x. 2.) that all their fathers were baptized in the cloud and in the sea. The apostle alludes to the pillar of the cloud that followed them, sometimes hanging over them, and the red sea through which they passed. Now is there any thing like dipping here? and yet the word baptism is used, and it describes the sprinkling of the children of Israel with the dew of the cloud which was above them, and the moisture and spray of the waves through which they passed, and which stood by their sides like walls, but in which they were not dipped at all. So that it is evident that in these passages to *baptize* must mean to *sprinkle*.

Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Again, see Ezek. xxxvi. 25—“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.” Here the very word, *sprinkle*, to which the baptists so object, is used by Jehovah himself in a passage most evidently prophetic of christian baptism.

Answer to arguments derived from some other passages. It is sometimes said that such passages as Col. ii. 12, can only be interpreted on the supposition that baptism is by immersion. The words are these—“Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.” Now it is said that christians are here described as buried with Christ in

baptism, and it is asked how this can be, unless they go down beneath the surface of the waters just as a body is laid in the grave beneath the surface of the ground. In reply it should be said that, undoubtedly, the baptizing by immersion seems to give a peculiar significancy to the expressions here used, but it is, at the same time, to be recollected that the sentence is pregnant with meaning, and that the figure is quite satisfied in *whatever way* we suppose baptism to be administered. For the fact or doctrine intended to be represented here is spiritual death and spiritual regeneration; in other words, a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness. And the question is this—Is the figure borrowed from the *death and resurrection* of Christ, or from the *immersion and emersion* of a person in baptism?

Now another passage will show us which is the *Rom. vi.* most correct—(*Rom. vi. 3, 4.*) “Know 3, 4. ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that *like as Christ was raised up from the dead* by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the *likeness of his death*, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” Here we see that the figure all through is not baptism, *or any peculiar mode of its administration*, but the *death, burial, and resurrection* of Christ. We are baptized into His *death*, that like as his body was *buried*, so our “old man” should be buried, and like as his body was *raised from the dead* so should we

rise from the death of sin, and walk in the newness of holy life. Baptism is the sign, seal, and gate of our *entrance* into this state. The language might be just the same if we were to put circumcision instead of baptism. I mean that it is not at all necessary to the understanding of the passage that we should be introduced into the covenant by a rite like baptism by immersion. Whatever the rite may be, the figure and its significant meaning is the same, *i.e.* the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord. And this we may easily see by putting the word circumcision instead of the word baptism, *e.g.*, "As many of us as were *circumcised* into Jesus Christ were *circumcised* into His death. Therefore we are buried with Him by *circumcision* unto death, &c. The meaning would be just as complete and the language just as correct in this case as it is in the passage in question. It seems quite clear from these considerations that it is by no means necessary to the understanding of the passage referred to in the epistle to the Colossians, that baptism should represent by any outward emblem, such as descent into water and rising from it, the burial of the soul with Christ and its resurrection with him. The death of Christ and his burial is the figure, and the death of the carnal principle or the "*old man*" is the thing figured.

Practice of the early church. It is not intended to be denied that immersion was the ordinary practice of the early church: but it is equally certain that the apostle did not teach, either orally or by their writings, that it was *essential*

to the validity of the rite. This is well remarked by a writer in the *Christian Observer*, 1839, "When Basilides as Eusebius relates, was baptized by his brethren in a prison, we cannot suppose that either a bath was allowed by his jailors, or that the church considered that the office would be useless without it. St. Lawrence is related to have baptized a soldier from a pitcher of water, and St. Cyprian admitted the validity of clinical aspersion to sick persons. In warm climates, where bathing was a constant habit, immersion was, doubtless, generally practised; but the other method was not accounted invalid, nor is there anything in Scripture to prove it so.

Generally by immersion but frequently otherwise.

Practice of the Church of England, altered in the reign of Elizabeth. We ought, however, to add, that affusion or sprinkling was not much used in England till the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when it was practised and encouraged by the English exiles returning from the continent, who, says Wheathy, "thought they could not do the church of England a greater piece of service than to introduce a practice dictated by so great an oracle as Calvin." Hitherto there had been no sanction to the practice, except in case of the child being weak. In the Catechism, as issued at the accession of James I., we read, "Water, wherein the person baptized is dipped, or sprinkled with it," but this might be meant only to relieve scruples where the latter was necessary, not to recommend it. But the Directory, issued by the Parliament upon the subversion of episcopacy, declared it "not only lawful, but sufficient and

most expedient that children should be baptized by pouring or sprinkling water on the face;” and to prevent immersion, it was expressly provided, that baptism should not be administered “in the places where fonts, in the time of popery, were unfitly and superstitiously placed.” Popery, we must suppose, in this document was intended to include the Church of England; but it is somewhat remarkable, that popery, which was made the bugbear for the occasion, had been the chief promoter of affusion or sprinkling, before the time of Calvin; for the Greek, and we believe all the oriental churches, used immersion. At the restoration our present rubric was introduced: adhering to the *ordinary* primitive usage, if the child is certified able to bear it; but allowing affusion to prevent danger.

Conclusion We may, therefore, safely, and without fear of contradiction, conclude, *from the foregoing.* that immersion or dipping is by no means necessary to the valid administration of baptism, that the use of water is the main and only thing required, as it respects the material and emblematic part of the sacrament, and that if water is applied, whether by effusion, sprinkling, or immersion, and at the same time the proper words are used, and this too, by those who are authorised to administer the rite, then the administration is good, in other words, the subject, be he infant or adult, is baptized.

CHAP. II.

THE TIME OF BAPTISM.

For the unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.—1 Cor. vii, 14.

“ Since Lord to thee,
A narrow way and little gate
Is all the passage; on my infancy,
Thou didst lay hold and antedate
Thy faith in me.
Oh! let me still
Write thee Great God, and me a child,
Let me be soft and supple to thy will,
Small to myself, to others mild,
Be hither ill.”

“GEO. HERBERT.” H. BAPTISM.

Two main arguments of Anabaptists. Having thus considered the proper *mode* of baptism, we will now consider the proper *time*. The baptists assert, that no one ought to be baptized until he comes to years of discretion. And they bring forward two main arguments to prove this. 1st, because no one ought to be baptized who has not repentance and faith: and in addition, because no child can, so they say, enter into covenant with God; and 2ndly, because there is no in-

stance in Scripture of an infant being baptized, or of an express command to baptize them.

1. *Repentance and faith needed.* In regard to the first there is but little difference between the church and the baptists: while *they* say, on their part, that *no one* ought to be baptized who has not repentance and faith, and therefore no one ought to be baptized, who is not of such an age as to be able to repent and believe. The church holds on her part that *no one who has come to years of discretion*, if he has never received baptism before, ought to be baptized, unless he repent and believe. This we have

In what way the church agrees to this. examples for. When the chamberlain of Candace asked Philip, whether he might be baptized, he said, "*If thou believest, thou mayest.*" Before Simon was baptized, it is said, that "*he believed,*" Acts viii. 13. So it is said of the other people of Samaria, "*when they believed, they were baptized,*" Acts viii. 13. From these and

As to Adults. from other instances and expressions in Scripture, we learn, that before a *grown-up person* is admitted to baptism, it must be ascertained by the minister that he believes. I use the word "*ascertain,*" not as if it were possible in all cases to find out *for certain* whether a person believes; for we know that even after Philip had baptized Simon Magus, the Apostle Peter told him that he had neither part nor lot in the matter. And we may, perhaps, suppose the same to have been the case with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v.) and with Demas, and with some of the disorderly persons

mentioned in 1st Cor., and with the carnal teachers mentioned in Phil. iii. 18; and with the Judaizing teachers in Gal. v. 2. It appears however, from all this, that if a grown-up person, who, living in a christian country, had from some accident or neglect, never received baptism; or if a grown-up heathen having heard the preaching of the gospel should profess his belief on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and if there should be no reason to doubt his sincerity, the Apostles would have baptized such a person, and we, therefore, ought to do the same. And this is evidently all that we can legitimately deduce from these examples.

They will not carry us a step farther. They will by no means warrant the conclusion of the 2. *As to* baptist, which has been mentioned *infants.* above, viz. that adults are the *only* proper subjects for baptism, on the ground that they only can repent and believe. It is extremely important to remember this; for it is the misapprehension of this argument that is the foundation of the baptist errors. And it is by placing these examples strongly before the minds of those that are not well informed, and studiously keeping all others in the back ground, that they contrive to increase their numbers.

The objection that infants cannot enter into covenant, considered. We never should forget that it ought to be only on grounds indubitably strong and quite irrefragable that the Christian church should act in taking so fearful a step as that of the exclusion of all the infants of Christendom from the blessings and benefits of baptism.

Such an exclusion, as will be shown hereafter, ought to rest on nothing less certain than a positive command.

Deut. xxix. 10—12. But in addition to this the baptists also assert that no infant can enter
Exod. xix. 3. into covenant with God, and that, therefore, no infant ought to be baptized. The answer to this is clear, and it is as follows—*If infants ever have entered into covenant, infants may do so again. There is no absolute impossibility in the case.* But we know that they were admitted into covenant by circumcision, generation after generation, for many hundred years, by God's own express command; we have, moreover, (*Deut.* xxix. 10—12,) an instance of the admission, at one and the same time, of the whole nation of Jewish infants, together with their parents into covenant.—“Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God, *your little ones*, your wives, and the stranger that is within thy gates, &c., that thou shouldest *enter into covenant* with the Lord thy God, and into his oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day. That he may establish thee to day for a *people unto himself*,” &c. And then further on, as if the words were not comprehensive enough, and might not include those that came after, he adds, v. 15, that the covenant is also “with *him that is not here this day*, that is, unborn children; for “all Israel,” v. 2, (*viz.* all the Jews that were alive,) were with him that day. And this is not the only covenant of which the same may be said, for (see v. 1.) he alludes

to another covenant made with them in Horeb; and both these covenants are spoken of in the same way as made with the children of Israel, Deut. xxiv. 6, and Ex. xix. 3). And although the little ones are only mentioned *expressly* in the second, yet there can be no doubt at all that they were included in the first.

The conclusion then is not to be denied that *little infants can enter into covenant with God*; for the very sufficient reason that God has actually permitted and enjoined their doing so.

Second objection that infant baptism is not mentioned in Scripture, met in four ways. In answer to the second objection, *viz.* that there is no instance in Scripture of the baptism of an infant, there are four things to be said.

1st. It is not to be expected that there should be mention made of infants being baptized.

2nd. There *is* mention of whole houses being baptized, which must almost undoubtedly have included infants.

3rd. Baptism is the seal of the same covenant as circumcision, and as Jewish infants had a right to circumcision, Christian infants have a right to baptism.

4th. If infants were not to be baptized, we should have been expressly commanded not to baptize them.

If infants are not rightful claimants of baptism on earth, how can they be received into heaven if they die in their infancy?

*First ef-
forts of
Christi-
anity di-
rected to
adults.* 1st. It is not to be expected that the baptism of infants should be mentioned.

We must remember that the preaching of Christ was the preaching of a new dispensation; and it is impossible that any but those who were grown up could listen to this preaching, or be convinced by it, and be converted. Now the Gospel history only gives an account of those who were *converted* to the faith of Jesus Christ, just in the same way as the early reports of the missionaries for the most part only mention the conversion of those who can understand the missionaries' preaching. But suppose a missionary of the church of England were to write home to the society that he had received into the church, by baptism, four or five grown up people, should we think that he had become a baptist, and that he did not mean to admit their infants? By no means. *No one mentions that which takes place as a matter of course.* It follows, therefore, that as we should not conclude that the missionaries do not baptize infants because they may not mention them by name, so, likewise, we should not conclude that the sacred writers did not baptize infants because they do not mention them by name.

*Whole fa-
milies bap-
tized.* 2nd. There is mention made of whole households that were baptized. In Acts xvi. 15, we are told that Lydia and her household were baptized; and in v. 33, that the jailor and all his; and again in 1 Cor. i. 16. St. Paul tells us that he baptized the house-

hold of Stephanas: and from these instances which are mentioned we may reasonably conclude that *many more whole households* were baptized. Take for instance that which is mentioned, Acts ix., 35, "All that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him (Peter) and turned to the Lord." Would not Peter do, on this mighty conversion, as Paul had done? Would he not baptize all the households? or were the poor infants to be left in heathenism or in judaism, while the grown up persons only were taken into the new covenant?

Baptism 3rd. Baptism is the seal of the same
replaces covenant as circumcision; and as
circumci- Jewish infants had a right to the privi-
sion. lege of circumcision, so also the in-
fants of Christian parents have an equal right to the privilege of baptism.

Baptism in the Christian dispensation takes place of circumcision in the Jewish* dispensation.

It is a very remarkable thing that as there were two sacraments in the old dispensation, so there are two in the new. The sacraments in the old dispensation were circumcision and the passover. Those in the new are baptism and the Lord's supper. Circumcision was the sacrament of admission into the Jewish church—baptism is the sacrament of admission into the Christian church.

Circumcision was an outward emblem of an inward grace: it was meant to figure forth or

* By Jewish we do not mean Mosaic.

show that just as the body or flesh, which is impure, was cut, so the impure body of sin in the heart was to be cut off and mortified. In the same way *baptism* is an outward emblem of an inward grace, and it figures this general truth, that just as the body is made clean by the washing of water, so it is grace that makes clean and purifies the soul.

*Circumcision was not a Mo-
saic rite,
but part of
the Abra-
hamic co-
venant
made for all
genera-
tions of the
faithful.* But the baptists object that circumci-
sion was a carnal ordinance, and only
suited to the carnal dispensation of
Moses, and that it cannot, therefore,
be used to help us in the interpreta-
tion of baptism, which is the spiritual
ordinance of a spiritual dispensation.
Now here lies their grand mistake.
Let the reader look at Gen. xvii. 7,
and he will there see that circumcision
has nothing whatever to do with the cum-
brous dispensation of Moses, but that it is in truth
and in deed an ordinance of faith and a seal of
the covenant of faith—"I will establish my
covenant between me and thee, and *thy seed*
after thee, in their generations, for an *everlast-
ing* covenant; to be a God unto thee, and *to
thy seed after thee.*" Again v. 13—"He that
is born in thy house, and he that is bought with
thy money, must needs be circumcised: and
my covenant shall be in your flesh for an *ever-
lasting* covenant. And the uncircumcised man-
child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circum-
cised, *that soul shall be cut off from Israel*: he
hath broken my covenant." These are some of

the words spoken to Abraham when God made his covenant with him.

It is like the Christian covenant—a covenant of faith. Gal. iii. 7, &c. Now this covenant is in all respects the same as the Christian covenant. It is the covenant of faith, and so is the Christian covenant also the covenant of faith. This is not merely what the writer says, but it is the saying of St. Paul himself. These are his words, Gal. iii. 7. "Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of *Abraham*. And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before (*i.e.* beforehand) the gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.'" And again Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that THE BLESSING OF ABRAHAM might

And Christians still enjoy its blessings. Gal. iii. 17. come on the Gentiles *through faith*. It is here to be specially noted, that we are *now* enjoying the *blessing of Abraham*; for the apostle says that the *blessing of Abraham* was to come on the Gentiles. The law—the hard law of Moses came *between* Abraham and Christ; but the apostle tells us, Gal. iii. 17, that this law could not disannul or make void the covenant of Abraham; which he emphatically calls the covenant "*confirmed in Christ*." Hence we see that we are under the covenant of Abraham, because the Christian covenant is only the confirmation and expansion of the Abrahamic covenant.

Now we know that under Abraham's dispensation every man-child was to be circumcised at eight days old. The question arises then why is not every child to be baptized under the Christian covenant. *No baptist can give a good answer to this.* For in the first place he cannot deny that the covenants are the same, for both are the covenants of faith. In the passage quoted above we see that St. Paul says that the gospel was preached to Abraham, Gal. iii. 8., therefore the covenant of Abraham is the gospel covenant. If then the covenant of Abraham was the gospel covenant, and the covenant of Christ is the gospel covenant, why, we may well ask, should infants be admitted into this covenant under Abraham, but be excluded under the Lord Jesus Christ?

Again we are told in Gen. xvii., that the covenant which God made with Abraham was an *everlasting* covenant. But that which is everlasting cannot be done away, so that by this expression we see that the covenant of Abraham must be *now existing*, that is, it is the covenant of faith, or in other words, it is the covenant of the gospel which we enjoy. But if this be the case children must be admitted into it; for in the same place it is called "an everlasting covenant to be a God unto thee and *to thy seed after thee.*" And immediately afterwards Abraham is commanded to circumcise children; and the command is so strong that it is also added that an uncircumcised child should be cut off from Israel (though he was a little babe, and quite

unconscious of what was done), because not to be circumcised was to break God's covenant.*

Christians Now if the dogmas of the baptists be
are the true (that is) if children were only to
children of be admitted into the covenant before
Abraham. the coming of Christ, it surely would have been expressly told us. But instead of this, St. Paul tells us that we are all *the children of Abraham* by being Christians. But if we are all the children of Abraham, our little ones are the children of Abraham too; for we are told that the promise and the covenant are to Abraham and to *his seed* after him; and St. Peter (Acts ii. 39), in his sermon at Pentecost, tells us who are Gentiles quite as clearly as he told those who were Jews, that "the *promise* is to us and to our children." And as all the children† of

* It seems by this as if God took special care that parents should not be so regardless of their children's welfare, or so misinterpret His covenant as to exclude their little ones from it. It has always been the tendency of the proud reason of man to disbelieve, and so to slight and despise mysteries. Most certainly circumcision was a mysterious ordinance. The Jew might have reasoned that Abraham had faith before he was circumcised; and might have asked of what use, therefore it could be to ~~is~~ circumcise infants before they could possibly have faith exactly as the baptists reason and question now. God cut short such reasoning, by commanding circumcision on pain of being cut off from Israel. The commands to baptize are so strong and its administration, is so strongly guarded John iii. 5, that it was a point constantly mooted in the early church whether an infant unbaptized could possibly be saved. The great Augusten, at one time, decided that it could not; though subsequent reflection led him to a different and a wiser conclusion.

† Although males only could be circumcised, yet females were also in the covenant, deriving as it were the blessing

Abraham had a right to be admitted into covenant with God, what reasonable grounds can be given why our little ones, who are also children of Abraham, (as shewn above) should not be admitted too?

The command to circumcise is transferred to baptism, and females are included in that command. But then, fourthly, the baptist says that there is no *express* command to baptize infants. In reply to this we would say, first, that instead of being bound to shew the baptist an express command to baptize infants, the baptist is bound to shew us an express command not to baptize them. (The reader will find this demonstrated in a subsequent page. Before entering, however, on this, we would give a reply to the objection as here made, shewing also some of the strong general grounds which there are for baptizing infants, as well as the great blessing connected with the ordinance.

Now it has been proved above that the command to Abraham to admit all children into the covenant, applies to the children of Christians; and therefore we answer that we *have an express command to admit children into the covenant*; and as the form, *and only the form* of admission is now changed, and is by baptism instead of circumcision, we have in truth *a command delivered as far back as the time of Abraham to baptize every young child.*

But we have also *Christ's words and Christ's* through the males, according to the principle which the apostle states "the head of the woman is the man, and the head of the man is Christ."

action. When *our Lord* gave the commission to the apostles it was in these words, “Go ye and *make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.” Now here it is evident that the disciples were to go and preach the gospel. They that heard them were to believe, and when they believed they were to be baptized. But then it is said they were to *make disciples of all nations*, that is of all nations and of *all* the people in them. How then could this be unless the children were baptized into the faith as well as their believing parents? and this interpretation is confirmed by referring to the latter part of the verse—“He that believeth not shall be damned.” Now we know that the infants could not believe, is it, therefore, to be taken for granted, that the infants were to be all damned? We do not suppose that even baptists generally would hold this, although it is to be feared that it is maintained by many of them. And it is most evident that if the re-

* “*Make disciples of*”—this is the true meaning of the word which is rendered “*teach*” in the New Testament. Justin Martyr uses the very word, which is here translated *teach*, almost as a synonyme for *baptizing*. His words are these—“several among us of sixty and seventy years old of both sexes who were *made disciples of* to Christ from our childhood, (ὅτι ἐκ τῶν παιδῶν ἐμαθητεύθησαν τῷ Χριστῷ). This can only be understood by the fact that the way in which persons were made disciples was by baptism—for infants could not be made disciples by repentance and faith.”

stricted view of the general baptist be the right view, (*i.e.*) if it be true, *verbatim et litteratim*, that only a believing person is to be baptized, and not his children also, all *means* of admission to the covenant of God's grace on earth, as well as all *right* to such admission, is denied them, and it is, therefore, an impossibility that *on any correct and consistent view* of the scheme of salvation through the covenant of grace, they can be otherwise than lost. For if, according to the Lord's words, "he that believeth not is to be damned," and if according to the baptist's view, no one is to be baptized that does not believe, it follows immediately and necessarily that an unbaptized person is in the same predicament as an unbeliever, and therefore must be subject to the same awful sentence of damnation: and hence that infants dying unbaptized, and *that* not from accident, so to speak, but from their absolute unfitness for the ordinance, must, *according to the scheme of the baptists*, be inevitably lost.

And this is further evident from a consideration of the meaning of the covenant of grace. For the covenant of grace is the covenant of free pardon and mercy. It is of gift, not of debt. It is vouchsafed to a penitent believer, not because he repents and believes, but to give him repentance and remission, and the aid of the Holy Spirit, to help him to believe. Why then, it may be asked, is it to be free to the man but restricted to the child? or if restricted to the child on this side the grave, how can we expect that it will be expanded and embrace his case

on the other side? If he remain a child of Adam and of death on earth, and if we believe that there is no purgatory, but that death sets the final seal on the state of the soul, which so lies as it falls, how can he be a child of Christ and of life in heaven? or how, in other words, can the little infant be a child of glory in heaven without being first a child of grace on earth?

Our Lord's own conduct with children. Again, our blessed Lord when on earth took up little children in his arms, and blessed them. See the beautiful account of this in St. Mark x. 13—16. Now why was this done? It may, with great reason, be answered that it was done in order to guard against such errors as the baptists hold. For mark what were the thoughts of the disciples. They blamed those that brought the children to Christ. Why? because they thought, as the baptists also think, that the children not having reason, could receive no good from Him. But what said Jesus? Hear His blessed words, as recorded by St. Mark,—“When Jesus saw it,” that is, when he saw the disciples preventing the little children from coming to Him, “He was much displeased, and said unto them, suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.” Such are His own words, and He goes further, telling them not only that little children could receive the kingdom of God, that is gospel grace—but that they received it better than any other, and that they are an example in their simplicity and docility of the way in which it should be received; for

“whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child he shall not enter therein.”

Mysteries must not be explained away as figurative. Now the baptists may say that this is only a figure of speech, for this is the way of those persons who deny mysteries. They tell you that all that cannot be comprehended by their reason is figurative, and that a little child is only a figure of teachableness. But certainly this was not the thought of our Lord; He commanded them to be brought to him to receive a real blessing, *for when He blessed them they must have been blessed indeed.* And so sacred history tells us that some of them became martyrs; and whether this be true or not any believing parent can easily imagine the feelings of awe with which the parents of these little ones would receive them back from those everlasting arms, and the hope, nay, the certainty of godly success with which they would be likely to bring them up.

This passage then shows most convincingly *that infants can receive a spiritual blessing* and are therefore the proper subjects for baptism, which is the seal and entrance to the covenant of grace.

And we have thus shewn in four different ways, the utter weakness of the arguments made use of by the baptists against infant baptism, the identity of the Abrahamic and Christian covenants, and the command *totidem verbis* as well as the command by implication to baptize infants.

CHAP. III.

THE NATURE AND EFFECTS OF BAPTISM.

“ Go ye and make disciples of all nations, (by) baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Matt. xxviii. 19.

“ If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Gal. iii. 29.

As he that sees a dark and shady grove
Stays not but looks beyond it on the sky ;
So when I view my sins mine eyes remove
More backward still, and to that water fly.

Which is above the heavens, whose spring and vent
Is in my dear Redeemer’s pierced side.

GEO. HERBERT. “ THE CHURCH.”

*Baptism
the seal of
the cove-
nant. Re-
mission of
sins. The
influence of
the Holy
Ghost.*

We have thus considered, in the first place, the proper mode of baptizing, and have shewn that the method of the English church is strictly right; and we have also considered, in the second place, the proper time at which baptism should be administered, and have shewn, as we believe, to the satisfaction of every candid mind, that there is not a doubt but that infancy is that time, and that infants, therefore, are rightful subjects of this sacred and blessed ordinance. A question of not less importance than either of the foregoing here presents itself, and it relates to the nature

of the blessing which baptism conveys. In respect to this it may be said, without fear of controversy, that *baptism is God's covenant seal*; it is as it were *the perfecting of the title deeds of the new covenant, and the delivery of them to the baptized*. But the blessings of the new covenant are the remission of sins, and the influence of the Holy Ghost; these then are the blessings sealed to the child in baptism. And this may be illustrated in several ways—

I.—And first, in regard to the remission of sins, we read in Mark x. that little children were *blessed* by Jesus Christ.

But no *unpardoned* child of Adam can receive a blessing from God, for while he is in the guilt of original sin, he is an alien, an outcast, a rebel, and subject only to unmitigated wrath and the curse. Therefore when Jesus blessed these little children, the original sin of Adam must have been cancelled, either at that time or previously—that is, by his blessing or by circumcision. Now that it was by circumcision, is evident from the following consideration :

II.—The children of the Jews were by the rite of circumcision put into covenant with God. But how could guilty children, children with the guilt of Adam upon them, be covenant children? Any one who understands any thing of the gospel as preached to the Isr elites in old time, (as St. Paul tells us it was preached to them, Heb. iv. ii., as well as to the Gentiles afterwards) must see that this could not be. Hence it is evident that since circumcision was the seal of

admission to the covenant, it was the seal of the doing away of original sin.

III.—But the seal of baptism in the *new dispensation* is only the new and altered seal of circumcision in the old. Both are *admission seals*, the emblems cut upon them are different, the motto or meaning is the same. The emblem in the one case is the cutting of the flesh because of the defilement of the flesh: the emblem in the other, that is, in baptism is the washing of the flesh, because of the same defilement of the flesh.

Those still in Adam's guilt cannot be in covenant with God. Hence, as no one can be in covenant with God who is in the guilt of Adam's transgression, and as the Israelites were put into covenant with God by circumcision, (the circumcision showing thus by an outward seal the doing away of inherited guilt by the transmission of inherited blessing,) so does baptism by a similar seal of admission to the covenant, outwardly and visibly declare the child baptized, to be freed from the guilt of original sin.

Children of christians holy. IV.—Again, the seed of christians is called holy, 1 Cor. vii. 14. “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.” Here we see most plainly that the children of christians, even if only *one* parent is a christian, are holy. But they cannot be holy, God cannot look upon them as holy, if the guilt of sin be upon them.*

* It has been much discussed, whether the word trans-

Now it is because they are a holy seed that they have a right to baptism. Hence baptism is a seal of the admission to the covenant, but

lated "*holy*," signifies that kind of holiness given by baptism, or that kind which comes from christian descent. Either signification equally suits our view. If the child was called holy, or *ἅγιος* by descent, he had from this very circumstance, a right to baptism; if he were called holy because he had been baptized, this very term shows the right of children to this sacred ordinance to be recognized by the apostle Paul. It seems strange that no text however simple or however plain can escape cavil and dispute. The baptists sometimes even dispute this, and say that if the child is holy, and so has a right to baptism, so also is the unbelieving husband or wife, and that such an unbelieving adult has the same right to be baptized as the passive and unoffending child. This argument bears folly on the face of it. There is no impediment to baptism but unbelief of the will and of the heart. This impediment the adult presents, and so opposes the grace of God. Not so the child, which for its mother's or its father's sake, but more than all for Jesus' sake, is received into the covenant of grace and free mercy, for the very reason that its little heart has not yet acquired the power of deliberate resistance and opposition. Besides what is the apostle arguing for? Is it not that the grace of God in one of the parents more than neutralizes the worldly and polluting effect of unbelief in the other, and that in consequence that kind of ceremonial and hereditary sanctification which the Jewish child had under the law is enjoyed by the Christian child under the gospel. And if this be the case the conclusion is evident and immediate that the child has a right to admission to the covenant, and therefore to baptism, which is the seal of the covenant.

It is sometimes added, in order to give force to the objection, that it is impossible to suppose that the same word, sanctify, is used in two different senses in the same passage. In answer to this we have only to refer to John xvii. 19. "And for their sakes I sanctify (set apart) myself, that they also might be sanctified (made holy) through the

as stated above, one blessing of the covenant is the pardon of original sin, therefore baptism is *the seal of the pardon of original sin.*

Such are the considerations which both illustrate and prove demonstrably the truth that one of the blessings sealed in baptism is the pardon of original sin. The *great* proof, undoubtedly, is that last mentioned, that it is the new covenant admission seal, and as such *must ratify this blessing*; but the considerations entered into above show how this truth is deducible from other sources, and capable of great additional confirmation..

The same proofs as to the gift of the Spirit. That which has been said of the remission of original sin may also be said of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Our blessed Redeemer purchased this gift for His church. All that are members of His church become possessors of the blessings He has purchased for it. But the baptized are sealed as members of His church, therefore the baptized have the gift of the Holy Ghost sealed to them as well as the remission of original and, in case of adults, of actual sin. This is in strict accordance with the words of St. Peter. "The promise" (of God's spirit to be poured out) "is to you and to your children," &c. Acts ii. 39. In the case of infants the only sin remitted is original sin,

truth." In this sense it is evident that Christ could not speak of himself as sanctified in the same sense as his people are sanctified.

But, lastly, if, as Bishop Stillingfleet determined the word *αγιοσ*, (1 Cor. vii. 14.) means that the children were already baptized, all controversy is at an end on the point.

because that is the only sin with which their nature is defiled. But in the case of adults, rightly receiving the sacrament, the guilt of actual sin as well as original sin is visibly as well as really washed away. "Arise," said Ananias to Saul, "arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins," and "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts iii. 38. Conformably with which the Nicene creed—"I acknowledge

The doctrines of the church fully accordant.

one baptism for the remission of sins." In equally strict accordance with these truths is the answer in the church catechism. Q. What dost thou chiefly learn in these articles of thy belief?

A. First, I learn to believe in God the Father who hath made me and all the world. Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind. Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God.

Baptismal regeneration. Its legitimate meaning.

These considerations throw much light on the meaning of baptismal regeneration. The child, by being born of its parents as considered in their *natural* state inherits the guilt and curse and condemnation of Adam. The child, by being born of parents as considered in their *christian or covenant* state, is an inheritor of their blessings. But their great blessing is that they are members of Christ, and this too is the great blessing which their children inherit from them. By nature they are the children of the

first Adam, and so heirs of wrath; but by grace they are children of God through Christ, the second Adam, and so heirs of mercy. The first Adam was their old head, and he was a head of death. The second Adam is their new head, and he is the head of life. By natural descent they belong to the family of the old Adam, but by Christian descent they belong to the family of the new Adam, even of Christ. Hence the language of St. Peter, 1 Ep. Ch. i. v. 3, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath *begotten us again unto a lively hope*, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Here, too, we see the meaning of the text quoted above, (1 Cor. vii. 14.) to the effect that the children of christians are a holy or peculiar seed.

And this explains, in some way, the meaning of regeneration. Generation is the natural process of begetting and birth. By our natural birth we are brought out of the dark womb into the light of life. But that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Therefore by natural generation we are only heirs of wrath. But *regeneration* is a new or changed mode of birth, and this is sealed by baptism, and shows that the child is taken out of the dark state of hopeless condemnation in which he was in *Adam*, and put into the new state of life and hope, 1 Peter, i. 3, which he has in Christ, and which is called the *regeneration*, Matt. xix. 28. This passage and Titus iii. 5—"He saved us by the washing of regeneration," &c., are the only two passages in Scripture in which the word regeneration is used. The Greek for "born again," in John iii., is literally "*born from above*."

With which the catechism of the church of England agrees.

And this shews us the true meaning of another part of the church catechism—"Wherein (*i.e.* in baptism) I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." The meaning of member is branch—*membrum* is the Latin word for branch. Now by baptism a child has the privilege of christian membership sealed to him. And if he is a member of Christ, I need not say that he is in the christian family, and so a child of God, and a possessor of the right of a heavenly inheritance.

The objection to the statements made is answered by Christ.

But some object to this, and ask—"How can this be when we see so many grow up so careless and ungodly? To such objectors we can only give our blessed Lord's own answer—"I am John xv. the vine, ye are the branches. Every branch *in me* that beareth not fruit he taketh away." So we see from these words that there are "branches," yea, even "*branches in him,*" that bear no fruit; and these he cuts off as a vine-pruner cuts off barren branches. These then, we reply, are the baptized members that bear no fruit, the baptized children that grow up in a cold and careless state, and the baptized men and women that live worldly, ungodly lives. These are they whom Jude calls "*twice dead,*" v. 12. He is writing of Christians who had violated their baptismal covenant; and he calls them twice dead because they had died first in Adam by inherited guilt, but then being regenerated in Christ they had died by dreadful apostacy. These too are they of whom St.

Peter writes, 2 Pet. i. 9—"He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Or again, 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21—"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

Objection. But the baptist will answer, perhaps, that even if true christians beget "a holy seed," that is, if their children are "holy," and as being such have a right to baptism, still that does not give the right to those who are only nominal christians.

1.—On this objection it may be first remarked, that it is a very high matter that is assumed in it, namely, that the *personal* holiness of a parent descends in a stream of *personal* holiness through the child. We are not aware of any scriptural authority for such an article of faith. The head of corruption to the child is Adam, the head of righteousness is Christ.

The present time one of trial, not of certainty. 2.—Again, the present is the dispensation of the church militant; it is the dispensation of trial and not of triumph; it is the dispensation in which tares and wheat are mingled together; and it is very difficult, nay, not only difficult but impossible, in all cases, to determine who are true and who are only nominal Christians.

Unhappily it is too true that there are very many church people as well as baptists who give no evidence of being Christians, except it be that they have been baptized.

Baptism upon profession. 3.—But again, the scriptural plan is to baptize upon profession. Simon Magus professed faith in Christ, and he was baptized, and yet he was not converted in heart. The Ethiopian nobleman did the same, and he was baptized. The profession of faith in early times, by grown-up persons, was that in the apostles' creed—Belief in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, (and in the union and communion of the church). And if parents bring their children to the church to be baptized, their sponsors make this profession for them, and so the children are received according to primitive example.

4.—The inheritance of Christian privileges is just the same as the inheritance of any other privileges. The Jewish infant had a right to the seal of the covenant of faith simply because he was a descendant of Abraham, however ungodly his parents might be. It is just the same with the Christian infant; he has a right to the seal of the covenant of faith, because his parents are *professors of the faith of Christ*.

The titles justly used. I am sensible that there are some persons, even among ourselves, who do not clearly understand the scriptural grounds on which any persons who are not living a godly life can be called “members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.”

1. “*Members of Christ.*”

Christians may be branches by vital union or by baptism. Now, I would refer them in the first place to the expression used by our Lord himself, and quoted above—“every branch* in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.” The words are simple and few, but they contain the awful truth, that every barren branch will be absolutely and for ever cut off. Now these branches are *in Him*—“every branch *in me* that beareth not fruit.” There are only two ways in which branches can be in the vine, or in other words, there are only two ways in which persons can be members of Christ: the one is that which is effected by the ingrafting of baptism, and the other that which arises from the union produced by a living faith. But the case is put and provided for by our Lord himself in which members are cut off. Either then these are simply the baptized, or else they are the living members. There must be *some* interpretation, and I fear those persons alluded to above will have just as much difficulty in reconciling themselves to the thought that members vitally united to Christ, that is united to Him by a living faith may be cut off, as that members made only so by baptism have yet a real and true right to be styled members of Christ or “*branches in me.*”†

* From “*Membrum,*” a branch, or limb, or member.

† It is on this view undoubtedly, that our Lord taught his disciples to pray “Our Father,” &c. Even Judas was taught to say this prayer, taught to say it, be it remembered, by Christ himself. Why was this, but because God through Christ shewed his *paternal* love even to that

2. *The title "children of God."* This difficulty being removed, that which would seem to some to attach to the expression *child of God and inheritor of the kingdom of heaven*, will vanish with it. But in addition it may be observed that no one can carefully study the Scriptures without seeing that there is a twofold sense to almost every phrase and term which is descriptive of divine privileges. God was really a father to the Jews, and if he was really a father to them they were really sons to Him, and yet he asks them reproachfully, "If I be a father where is mine honour?" which is as much as to say, "you have the privileges of heavenly parentage, but you have not the hearts of children. I am a father to you but you pay me no childlike obedience and honour." So too, (Deut. xxxii. v. 6,) Moses reproachfully asks the people—Do ye thus requite the Lord O foolish people and unwise? Is not He thy *father* that bought (or redeemed) thee? And again (v. 18,)—"Of the Rock that *begat* thee thou art unmindful." So also there is a circumcision of the flesh, and also a circumcision of the heart, of the letter and also of the spirit—a natural seed of Abraham and a spiritual seed of Abraham. And in regard to this last expres-

traitor. It was the selling of a *brother's* blood that was the condemnation of Judas.

In accordance with this teaching, it was universally the practice in the early church to allow the baptized to use the Lord's Prayer. But none were permitted to use it previously to receiving that ordinance.

sion * “*Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven,*” it is very remarkable that St. Paul tells us that all those who were his kinsman according to the *flesh*, that is, all the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, were “*the adoption,*” who are Israelites to *whom pertaineth the adoption, &c.* And then to show that what was true in the way of spiritual *privilege*, was not true in the highest sense of *vital spirituality*, he adds, “they are not all Israel that were of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called,” (that is), that just as Abraham had a son Esau as well as a son Isaac, so even among that very Isaac’s descendants there is many a spiritual Esau, or in other words, even among the true Israel, *according to descent* there is many a false Israelite *according to the spirit*. Now we cannot have a higher authority than this for saying, that people may be children of God in one sense and not in another, members of Christ in one sense and not in another, that there is in fact (for this is the apostle’s argument,) as much difference between one Israelite and another as there was between Isaac and Esau.

The Ep. to the Gal. forcibly illustrates this. We use exactly the same mode of expression as the apostle used to the Romans when we call all baptized persons members of Christ and children

* “*Inheritor.*” It has been before this attempted to exclude this word from the catechism. But this has been resisted on the ground that the word expresses a *right* and not a *possession*.

of God.* A man may be a child, though a prodigal, and it is not every prodigal that will return. "Ye are all, says the apostle to the Galatians, children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, *for as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" Now the evident meaning of this is as follows:—You, (Jews) were formerly children of God by being children of Abraham, but now it is altered; that kind of adoption is passed. You are now God's children, if you are baptized into the faith of Christ, and there is no need for your going back to circumcision to make yourselves "the adop-

* "But even from the ordinance itself we may consider great good as arising to the soul; since, as in the case of circumcision the person is thereby brought into covenant with God. The Israelites, as a nation, in covenant with God were highly privileged, for to them "belonged the adoption and the glory and the covenant and the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises, Rom. ix. 4." The same I doubt not may be justly said of all that are baptized: indeed we doubt not but that our reformers had that very passage of Scripture in their eye when in our baptismal service they instructed us to thank God for having regenerated the baptized person by his Holy Spirit; and in our catechism to speak of children as by the ordinance of baptism made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. These expressions are doubtless strong, and so are St. Paul's respecting the benefits of circumcision: and every blessing which he asserts to have been conveyed by circumcision, we may safely and truly apply to baptism. By the very admission of persons into covenant with God, they are brought into a *new state*, have a *right* and title to all these privileges; and by the exercise of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ they come into *eternal possession* of them."—SIMEON'S Sermons No. 1975.

tion," for "if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."† It cannot, in answer to this, be urged with any force that the adoption is here dependant upon and through the medium of the exercise of a living faith, (although it is most incontestibly true that there is no other means but that of a true faith, by which the blessedness of that privilege can be realised to the soul), for it is evident that the expression "children of God by *faith* in Christ Jesus" must be interpreted by what follows: "*For* as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," This shows us that they were children by having made a baptismal profession of the faith of Christ. They had openly confessed as we openly confess the Lord Jesus. And this is all that can be intended, for the apostle tells these very Galatians that he "stands in doubt of them," that "if they were circumcised Christ would profit them nothing;" and it is quite impossible to suppose that he, in one part of his letter, would tell them that he knew them to be all children of God by a *vital* faith, Gal. iii. 26;

† This too is the view which best explains ii. Cor. v. 16, 17. The relationship of the flesh from Abraham through Isaac has passed away. "I know no man after the flesh." The family is altered, we have a new and a better relationship through Christ, who is the head of a new family, into which family we are baptized. Yea, though formerly I knew Christ after the flesh, feeling him to be by birth a Jew like myself, I now see him thus no more, I view him as the father and brother, the redeemer and friend both of Jew and gentile, of every one in fact who believes and is baptized.

and in the other that he doubted whether they were Christians at all, Gal. iv. 20. Hence we see that “children of God by faith” *here* means children of God by the baptismal profession of the Christian faith.

1 *John* iii. 10. And this passage affords an ample foundation for the second clause of our answer in the catechism—“wherein I was made *a child of God.*” Let no one be staggered by such an expression as that in 1 *John* iii. 10. “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God.” We have explained above, or rather the Holy Ghost by the apostle Paul has explained for us how a man may be, by spiritual *privilege*, a child of God, and yet by heart and practice a child of Satan. And in this passage of St. John the very point marked out is the *manifestation* of those who are really and in heart children. It is as if the apostle had said “you all *profess* yourselves to be children of God, or, which is the same thing, you are all children by profession; but it is your works which show manifestly to the world who among you there are that have the hearts of children. This is the reasoning, *John* viii. 31—44, where, too, we find them called the children of Abraham, and so the adoption, and yet told that they were children of the devil. “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, if ye continue in my word, *then are ye my disciples indeed*; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered Him, we be Abraham’s seed, and were

never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, verily, verily I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. *I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.* They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, *if ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.* But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. *Ye do the deeds of your father.* Then said they to Him, we be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, *if God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth, and came from God; neither came I of myself, but He sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."*

3. *The* The same, with little change, may be *title.* "In- said of the third title—" *inheritor of*
heritance *the kingdom of heaven.*" *No man

* I find this same illustration used by Mr. Simeon, in treating of this subject, in Serm. 19 75, on 1 Cor. x, 15.

of the kingdom of heaven.” of necessity comes to the possession of the property to which he is heir. He may die before the time of taking possession arrives, or he may commit an act of forfeiture, or he may lose his reason, and all these casualties will prevent him from ever enjoying that to which he is heir. So it is of the inheritance of a heavenly kingdom. The inheritance is a right and a title, but it is not possession. We are called to this bright heirship by God’s great and free grace, but we must remember that we may fail of that grace, or in other words we may fall short of it, and miss those great blessings which, by that grace, are provided for us. “Looking diligently,” says the apostle, (Heb. xii. 15.) “lest any man* fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of bread sold his birthright, or *inheritance*. For ye know how that afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, and he found, &c.” Does not all this passage contain a solemn warning to all inheritors of the kingdom of heaven not to part with their inheritance? Is there any other sense in which it can be taken? Does it not warn us by the example of Esau, who, though the elder brother, and so entitled to the inheritance, yet sold his birthright; shewing us that our inheritance is

* Falling behind and away from the grace, not following it up as it were, but lagging behind and straggling out of the way and so losing that which God has graciously provided and prepared. The word in the original is ὑστερῶν.

not inalienable, that we too may lose it or barter it away, as thousands madly do for the vanities of this very vain world?

On the mode of addressing professing Christian congregations. I cannot leave this part of the subject without adding a few words on the mode in which professing Christians should be addressed. It need scarcely be said that they ought not to be addressed as if they were *heathens*.

And yet that they constantly are so addressed is a circumstance much to be deplored. There is and there always must be a most essential difference between those who are in the covenant and those who are not in it. They that are in the covenant are, to say the least, in name and profession on God's side. There are two great parties in the world, that of Satan and that of Jehovah, and all baptized persons are by their very baptism enrolled in the list of the armies of Jehovah; they are "*in numero viventium.*" It is true that too many of them are traitors in heart, but then how are they to be dealt with?

Traitors to be addressed as such, not as mere opponents. Professing Christians as such. Undoubtedly as we should deal with traitors. We should appeal to them on their privileges and on their sworn allegiance.* Oath breaking, forswearing themselves, is the guilt with which they are chargeable, and it is that with which they should be charged. "Such and such is your *profession*, such and such is the service required, such and

* No argument can be more prevalent to enforce a holy life than when the Spirit of God shall bring home to our consideration the oath that we have taken to be God's, and

such the gratitude you owe, and the privileges you enjoy. Now place by these the services you pay, the lives you live; compare the rich blessings which God has given you with the shameful return which you make to Him, and after such comparison say whether you do not stand justly self-condemned." It is most unreasonable and excessively injurious to plead with them in other words. Common sense exercised upon the language of the Bible and of the church tells them that they are not in the same state as the heathen; and *it is and it ought to be* extremely injurious to religion to appeal to men on any grounds which their judgment and which the majority of the books they read declare to be erroneous.

This more consistent with the tone of Scripture and the language of the church. How different, from the mode on which we have been remarking, is God's way, Mal. i. 6. "If I be a Father where is mine honour?" If you be sons where is the honour which you ought to give to me your Father? We should most certainly address Christian congregations as children by grace and adoption, that is, children of God by the great mercy and favour of God in Christ, and adopted members of his family, however disobedient they may be and prodigal, and however devoid they may be of the *spirit* of adoption. It is only to oppose all the enemies that oppose his glory and our salvation; when we shall be reminded that so long as we continue in a state of sin we live in perjury, having given our most serious promise to God to yield obedience to his will and laws, and to live as his servants and soldiers.—
 BR. HOPKINS, vol. 2, p. 428, on Baptism.

in this way that we can interpret, in any satisfactory manner, the language of our church formularies, which are in fact and in truth the language of the Bible.

Value of a knowledge of the original in rightly understanding the words grace, faith, &c. Many excellent persons, I believe, are very confused in their theological notions owing to their ignorance of the original language of the new Testament. By reason of this they are led to interpret such words as grace, faith, &c., as if they were always descriptive, the first of an actual effluence of divine light and strength from God, the second of a real active operation of the mind and heart on the subject of revelation. They are, therefore, startled at being told that a person may be in a state of grace though he may have no living divine principle in his heart, that is, though he may be an unconverted man, and that he may be a child of Abraham, who is the father of the faithful, though he may have no true and solid personal dependance on his Saviour. Now it is evident that grace is often used as descriptive of God's general mercy in Christ, without any reference to a participation, by individuals, of Divine mercy, (*e. g.*) "by grace are ye saved through faith," &c., (Eph. ii. 8.) Here the word *faith* expresses real and vital trust, the trust of the heart; but *grace* is not divine efficacious power, but the general word for the love of God in Christ; and is in fact the embodying of the abstract truth contained in John iii. 16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. God is reconciled to the world by the death of his Son: the

attribute of infinite justice is satisfied: God can save without any derogation from His immutable justice: the bar which guilt had raised is removed by the sufferings of the guiltless one. This is the way in which God is rendered or rather has rendered himself propitious. By the sacrifice of His dear Son He is reconciled to man, so that He can "be both just and the justifier," or acquitter "of him that believeth:" and His ministers now are ambassadors for Christ (the reconcilers of the world) beseeching men for Christ's sake, and in order that all His sufferings may not be unavailing to them.—"Be ye reconciled to God." And it is through faith ("by grace through *faith*, Eph. ii. "Whosoever *believeth* on Him, John iii.), it is through faith that man approaches to God, God having, by grace in Christ, removed the barrier, and made Himself approachable.

Grace may have regard to God or to ourselves.

This may be better understood by remembering that without going into all the meanings of the word which is translated "grace," there are two kinds of grace, the one that which alters the relation in which God stands to us and we to Him, the other that which alters the affections of our hearts. Of the former kind are, *reconciliation* through the propitiatory sacrifice, *pardon* and *adoption*. Of the latter, faith, love, patience, meekness, knowledge, temperance, or as Bishop Hopkins calls them, the two principal graces, the two greatest limbs of the new man, *repentance and faith*. The passage, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, clearly shews the difference of the

two kinds of grace. By this it appears that God is reconciled already to man, and has put his sins on Christ—"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." This is the first kind of grace. The second is effectual when man is reconciled to God. "By grace are ye saved through faith." Faith is the hand which appropriates covenant blessings when the Holy Spirit opens the heart. God is denominated gracious by the grace of reconciliation, pardon, adoption, &c.; man by the habitual graces or holy virtues which the Spirit of God produces in him. A consideration of the difference will clear the minds of many, and enable them to see how a person may be within the covenant of grace, and yet not in the strict sense of the word a gracious person or a partaker of grace; he is like the Jew of old, a partaker of the adoption, the glory, the covenant, and the promises, but only so by privilege. He has not made those blessings his own by faith. Like the same Jew in his wilderness-state, (though a rightful inheritor of Canaan,) he has not entered into the promised land of spiritual enjoyment *because of unbelief*.

The errors on this point have led to a misuse of the term regenerate, which the church rightly ap- And here we may add that the same error which prevails in addressing Christian congregations, as if they were uncovenanted heathens, leads to a false use of the term regenerate. There cannot be a doubt that our church holds, *in some sense*, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration.* We

* Forcibly shewn in an extract from Mr. Simeon's works hereafter.

See too part iv. on Baptismal Regeneration.

plies to the thank God in baptism that it has *baptist.* *pleased Him to regenerate the infant Holy Spirit.* We do not use these words hypothetically, but as descriptive of a real transaction. How can we, after this, call the baptized unregenerate? It is most true that in thousands of cases no *renewal* of heart may take place; but still the child is pronounced to be regenerated, and that too by God's Holy Spirit; and this is the difficulty, and particularly the mention of the Holy Spirit, as the agent in regeneration, which puzzles so many who yet are unwilling to deny the truthfulness of the language of the baptismal service. How (it is asked) can a child be said to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and yet not to be renovated in heart? They that ask this question will say that it is possible to conceive that the simple term *regeneration* may be used in a lower sense, as implying privilege rather than influence, a change of state without a change of heart; but then that they are prevented from resting on this ground by the language of the service, for the child is not merely said to be regenerated, but regenerated *by the Holy Spirit*, and that it is not possible, nay, almost a contradiction in terms, to say that the child is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and yet that no *spiritual* change has passed upon it. In answer, it is to be observed generally, that it certainly is difficult to conceive that any spiritual change should have taken place in those who grow up and live and die almost like heathens; and yet it is, on the other hand, extremely difficult to suppose that an ordinance of Divine institution, performed in obedience to Divine command, should carry with it no blessing.

The Holy Ghost the agent in baptism. This may be said *in general*, but in regard to this sacrament in particular, the language of the church service is clearly that of the Scriptures.* The Spirit is the agent in baptism, 1 Cor. xii. 13. “*By one Spirit* are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink *into one Spirit*. So, too, of the Jews in the wilderness, 1 Cor. x. iv., “They all drank of the same *spiritual* drink, for they drank of that *spiritual* rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased.” St. Paul (be it observed,) was writing to those who had been baptized by the hand of man, and yet he says clearly and distinctly that the Holy Spirit was the baptizer. The same truth is not obscurely hinted at in Heb. x. 29. “Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the *Spirit of Grace*.” Here it is evident that the doctrine, on which the whole passage rests, is sanctification† in its lower

* See hereafter, extract from Bishop Hopkins.

† “*Sanctification in its lower sense.*” So Bishop Hopkins writes on the two senses in which illumination is spoken of. “That illumination which is saving is not only light but influence too. As the light of the sun doth not only serve to paint the world and varnish over the variety and beauty of the several creatures that are in it, but by the *graceful* heat that its influence insinuates and

sense, or setting apart by the application of the blood of Christ in baptism to the mystical washing away of sin, and by the Spirit of Grace, or the gracious Spirit, the great agent now, as Bishop Hopkins well observes, in God's church. If, therefore, regeneration in any sense takes place in baptism, it is evident that as the Spirit is the baptizer, *it is right to say that the infant is regenerated by God's Holy Spirit.*

Regeneration and conversion are different.

If, therefore, baptism be called in Scripture the laver of regeneration, and if in addition to this, all professing Christians, at least at Corinth, if not throughout the world, are declared also in Scripture to be baptized by one Spirit, why should any man feel a difficulty in using the language of the baptismal service *in thanking God that it has pleased him to regenerate this infant by His Holy Spirit?* That such regeneration is wholly different from conversion of heart is most clear, for in almost every case of baptism in the New Testament, conversion of heart precedes baptism, and therefore precedes baptismal regeneration. I need scarcely mention the cases of the three thousand, Acts ii. (41), the five thousand, Acts iv. (4), the case of St. Paul, of the Eunuch, of Lydia, of the Jailor, of Cornelius, &c. Why, then, should any write

soaks into them doth also refresh them; and as its light discovers their beauty, so its influence increaseth them. So saving illumination not only illustrates the soul by its light, but by its congealing influences nourishes it, draws sap into it and fruit from it."—HOP. Ser. on John iii. 5.

See also p. 58, extract from Jonathan Edwards.

and speak as if the two things were identical, or, as if a man though regenerated by baptism were still an unregenerate man?

Effect in adults. From the passage quoted above, (Heb. x. 29), it would appear that the two great benefits of baptism are, the application of the blood of the covenant (and if this is applied original sin must be washed away) and the influence of the Spirit of Grace. Now in the case of adult baptism, here is all that is needed. Baptism is administered on the profession of the baptised person, he is a converted man, he has repented and believed, and in baptism his sin original as well as actual in its guilt is washed away, and the Holy Spirit, according to the promise of Christ, John xiv. 16, 17, takes him under his care. He is thus a regenerated person, he is regenerated by the Holy Spirit though he was converted before. His regeneration, therefore, is totally different from his conversion, *it is the authorized application of the blood of cleansing, and the seal of admission into the family of the new Adam*, (the individual being taken out of the family of the old Adam), *as well as that of the gift of the heavenly paraclete, the Holy Spirit.*

Effect in infants. But in the case of little children, the effect must be the same except in regard to actual sin, which cannot have been committed, because there is no developement of reason to understand a law, and sin is the breaking of law. Children, therefore, are admitted by baptism into the family of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven—they are visibly

cleansed from the guilt of original sin and the Holy Spirit is sealed to them as their counsellor and guide. But they may do despite unto the Spirit of grace—alas! they may and do. But this does not hinder the outgoings of his influence, it does not prevent us from saying and believing that the Spirit strives with them although they resist Him. “Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.” “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” Such expressions, indeed, show us the fatal power there is in man of ruining himself by resisting the Holy Spirit; and this should be particularly noted by those persons who, being ignorant of the language of the Scripture, think that it is impossible that a child should in any sense at all, be regenerated by the Spirit and yet grow up a wicked man. The difference between the influence of the Holy Spirit as exerted on true believers and on nominal Christians is well described by Jonathan Edwards:—“Although natural men may be the subjects of many influences of the Spirit of God (*e. g.*) Num. xxiv. 2, 1 Sam. x. 10, xi. 6, xvi. 14 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 3, Heb. vi. 4, 6, yet they are not in the true sense of Scripture spiritual persons. In the *true* saints the Holy Spirit is represented in Scripture as being so united to the faculties of the soul, that He becomes there a principle or spring of new nature and life. The light of the Sun of Righteousness does not only shine upon them, but is so communicated to them that they shine also and become little images of that sun which shines upon them,” &c. Hence the true saints are called “*properly*” spiritual,

not so natural men. "The light may shine upon a body that is very dark and black, and though that body be the subject of the light, it becomes no principle of light in it so as to be called a *lightsome* body: so the Spirit of God acting upon the soul only without communicating itself to be an active principle in it cannot (*properly*) denominate it spiritual."—I. EDWARDS, relig. affect. part iii.

It is most important to bear this distinction in mind: especially it is so for those who have been taught to shrink from the idea of any *exerted* influence of the Spirit short of that which is converting. Thousands are thus acted upon by the Holy Spirit in whom there is no reaction but that of resistance. This resistance is their condemnation, as John iii, 19. "This is the condemnation that light is come into the world and men love darkness," &c. "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." It may be said undoubtedly by some, "Of what use is this influence if it be not constraining or irresistible?" The answer to such a question is evident; it is that of St. Paul, Rom. ix. 20, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" If man be responsible the responsibility must begin somewhere. To ask why the Holy Spirit acts in any mode or in any degree upon the heart of man, and yet not always so as by an insurmountable necessity to make that heart bend to His influence, is to challenge the Most High on the very principles of his Creation and government, and to make the finite understanding of man sufficiently great to comprehend, and sufficiently

wise to dispute and decide upon the infinite intelligence of the Allwise.

Whilst, however, it may be no balm to a careless worldling, to know for certain that he has been from his youth up, resisting the strivings of God's gracious Spirit; it must be a great comfort to him, viewing this same truth in another light, to know that that Good Spirit has been soliciting and is in all probability still soliciting his affections. It requires greater wisdom than ours to mark the boundary line between that striving which is effectual, and that which may be resisted. We know not the exact spring which in each case must be touched that the flood gates of the heart may open, and grace not only act upon but enter into and penetrate the soul, but it is a blessed thing for each person who is endued with any knowledge of the Christian scheme to know and to be persuaded that God, the Good Spirit, is striving with him, and that if he will but yield to His influence, his soul will be not only acted on but penetrated by and subdued to his power.

This too is, or should be, a most comfortable *And great* thought for Christian parents. They *encourage-* know that the Holy Spirit is given, and *ment to* striving with their children's hearts. *Christian* There is hope in education, under this *parents.* view, otherwise it were a business of despair. A baptist can have no such *grounded* hope; and they, too, among ourselves who only trust to the *general* love and mercy of God, cannot have any thing like the confidence which they should have from the certainty that God is a reconciled Father to their children; that their

children are in the covenant, and so are interested in all its blessings, and partakers of all its privileges, one of the greatest being the aid and operation of the Holy Spirit.

We have dwelt the longer on this point because of its extreme importance and its high practical character. It is of the greatest consequence that the clergy who use the baptismal service should use it in its simple meaning, without adopting any circuitous mode of interpretation. That all may so use it we believe that we have clearly shown, and if we have not done so it will certainly be found to have been done by Mr. Simeon, in the passage which we have extracted from his works in a future page.

First circuitous mode of interpretation of the baptismal service. We call *that* a circuitous mode of interpretation which is adopted by those who say that the baptismal service is all used *on an hypothesis*, and that the event only can decide whether the hypothesis be a true one ; in other words, if the child becomes in after time a child of God *in heart*, then and in that case only was it true (so it is said) that he was regenerated by the Holy Spirit in baptism, and then only was his answer true in his catechism, that he was in baptism made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Even, too, under these circumstances, it was only true, they allow, by a kind of *expost facto* discovery, (*i.e.*) they declare a thing to be true *in presenti* which cannot possibly be true except *in futuro* ; and then say that because it comes to pass or

comes true in futuro, therefore it was right to declare it to be true in præsentî.

Second circuitous mode &c. Another mode of considering these words is that which gives them efficacy on the hypothesis that there is faith in the parents or sponsors. This rests on the ground of general promises to faith, such as “whatsoever ye ask in faith believing, ye shall receive,” connected with the special promise, (Acts ii. 39,) “to you and to your children,” and supported by the doctrine of inherited sanctification, 2 Cor. vii. 14. But it may well be asked on what grounds the first of these general promises and others like it can be so connected with the second and third as to make the efficacy of the sacrament of baptism wholly dependent upon its presence, (*i.e.*) what right have we to say that if children are brought by their parents to the font, in obedience to Christ’s command and special promise, and yet without a lively faith, and being thus brought are baptized with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, they are in fact *only subjects of the uncovenanted mercies of God*—they are not put within the covenant at all, (*i.e.*) they are in truth not baptized at all, for baptism is the seal of the covenant? Most surely this is something like making the efficacy of the sacrament depend upon *the intention* of the administrators of it, and not upon the free grace of God and his great favour to little infants; and if this be true, infants dying in a Christian land, whose natural guardians have not had *vital* faith, are in no better state than the infants of the heathen:

they are not in the covenant, and so the guilt of original sin is not washed away; for it can only be washed away by the blood of Christ through faith in grown up persons, and through the grace or favour of God sealed in baptism to infants. And if, therefore, this be the case, the language of our church in the end of the baptismal service, which is as follows, is entirely

If this mode of interpretation is right the rubric is wrong. wrong—"It is certain, by God's word, that children which are baptized dying before they commit actual sin are undoubtedly saved." *Appended to the baptismal service.*

There are difficulties in the way of both the first and second mode of interpretation here alluded to, so great that we scarcely know how it is possible for candid minds to surmount them. To those which have already been stated we would add the following:—The twenty-fifth article declares, that "sacraments are certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace," that is to say, that the seal of water in baptism assures us of God's covenant grace to the subject of baptism; in other words assures us that he has a Father's heart to welcome back prodigal children. But according to the above statement it is quite uncertain whether He has such a father's heart to the baptized child or no, for it cannot be proved till the child repents. And according to the same statement we never ought to tell a sinful child or a sinful man, "God has so loved *you* that he has given his only begotten son, &c." And thus God is constituted a Father—or if that expression be too strong—the proof

that we are to appeal to, in order to shew to any man that God has a Father's heart towards him, is not His grace and reconcilement in Christ Jesus, but *the person's own repentance*.

It need scarcely be added, what a sandy foundation this must be for any man's hopes. It is a foundation based in individual feeling, that is, in self. It is of the same character as that which was for sometime held by an eminent and excellent Christian man,* in regard to faith, unworthily cast out of the Genevan church, but which he has, to his great honour, most candidly, without fear of consequences to character, abandoned.

Occasional services to be charitably interpreted.— See note from Hooker. It is said we are aware that the expression of the occasional services of the church must be *charitably* interpreted, and with this we entirely agree. We do so because we have Scripture precedents for such charity. In the old dispensation, every Israelite that had been rightly (rite), that is according to God's ordinance, admitted into the covenant, was entitled to all its privileges, including pardon, adoption, and privileged sanctification; and yet all were not *Israel* that were of Israel.† So in the

* Rev. Dr Malan.

† Yet let every Christian man know that in Christian equity he standeth bound for to think and speak of his brethren, as of men that have a measure in the fruit of holiness and a right unto the titles, wherewith God in token of special favour and mercy vouchsafeth to honour his chosen servants. So we see the apostles of our Saviour Christ, do use every where the name of *Saints*: so the prophet (Habakkuk) the name of *righteous*. But let us all be such as we desire to be termed. *Reatus impii est pium*

new dispensation in the Epistles all are addressed as saints, even when the letter was to a disordered church like that at Corinth. The apostles looked, in fact, on all who had been baptized as being actually possessed of that of which baptism was the type and to which it was the admission seal; they were sanctified or consecrated in the ordinance to God's service, and they were, therefore, looked upon as saints and elect brethren.

Blessings do not lose their reality because they are not realized. But it does not follow that because they did not all realize in *their hearts* baptismal and saintly blessings, that therefore they were not *really* set apart; for this would be to make man's disobedience absolutely destroy God's grace. Such disobedience does, indeed, render the grace of God null and void *to the individual*, because he refuses to taste its blessing, or rather it deepens his condemnation, as mercy and love slighted must deepen it; but the very fact that it deepens condemnation shows that there is something real in it, something in which its partakers ought to have rejoiced, something for the contempt of which they will have to give a most strict and awful account.*

nomen, saith Salvianus. "Godly names do not justify ungodly men," we are but upbraided when we are honoured with names and titles, whereunto our lives and manners are not suitable.—HOOKER, serm. on Justification.

* It is remarkable, however, that in writing to the Galatians, the apostle addresses them as the Churches of God, and does not make use of the terms saints or faithful brethren, probably because of his great alarm at their Judaizing tendencies. We may observe, however, how even this language conflicts with the practice of the dis-

And if this be the case, as the slightest consideration will show us that it must be in adults, and if it be right, as the Scripture first most plainly demonstrates (and after the Scripture, the universal consent of every ancient church declares it is), to baptize infants, it is evident that they too are admitted by baptism to the participation of real blessings, and that they too by such admission incur real responsibility.

Baptism, It should always indeed be remembered that baptism is one, simple and *one and simple, the only bridge from old to new state.* single; it is the same to the child that it is to the grown man; we read nowhere of two baptisms, or a twofold result of baptism; it is both to infant and ancient a seal of covenant blessings: it is, as Luther has strongly declared—"the one only bridge from the old state in Adam to the new state in Christ."* The truth that should be grasped by the mind is that it is the covenant seal, the seal of admission to covenant blessings. Once let this be clearly understood, and there

senders, who confine their use of the term Church, to the small body of their communicants, forgetting the seven *Churches* and all that is said of some of them, in regard to dereliction of privilege and departure from love; forgetting (that is) that they were all called churches still notwithstanding their sad, and in the last instance, Loadecean state.

* This too was evidently the view of George Herbert.

As he that sees a dark and shady grove,
Stays not, but looks beyond it on the sky:
So when I view my sins mine eyes remove
More backward still and to that water fly,
Which is above the heavens; whose spring and vent
Is in my dear Redeemer's pierced side.

In "THE CHURCH." "HOLY BAPTISM."

will be no further difficulty; all the expressions which have been alluded to above, as stumbling blocks to many, become then simple and satisfactory. The minister has no difficulty in thanking God "for regenerating the infant by his Holy Spirit," because baptism is the seal of the covenant, and whosoever is admitted into the covenant is admitted to a participation of its blessings, which are pardon, membership of the family of the second Adam, and the assured aid and influence of the Holy Spirit. The language of the twenty-fifth article clearly supports this view. In that article it is asserted that sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges and tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be *certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God's good will towards us, &c.* This language should be particularly noted. It declares that the sacrament is the seal attesting God's good will and favour. There is only one way in which that good will can be manifested, and that is through Christ, at whose birth "good will towards men" was chaunted. The good will and grace must therefore be covenant grace and good will, and the blessings resulting those which the covenant assures.

Third inadmissible mode of explanation.

3.—It is said that as the church catechism has laid down repentance and faith, as required from those who come to baptism, and that these are promised by the sponsors on the child's part, the church receives that profession as sincerely made, and on such profession bap-

tizes the child. We have shown above how opposed to plain straight forward honest interpretation this would be, and it certainly is not the view of the church. But it *cannot* be so, for this plain reason, that in the case of private baptism no sponsors are present, and no promises on the child's part are made, and yet the child is considered truly baptized; so that when it is afterwards brought to the church it is received "as one of the flock of *true Christian people*," and the minister is directed to certify that "the child, having been born in original sin and in the wrath of God, is by the laver of *regeneration* in baptism received into the number of the children of God and heirs of everlasting life."

Encouragement to parents & sponsors, from the church in regard to baptismal privileges.

It is quite clear then that the three explanations usually given of the language of the baptismal service, are neither satisfactory to the mind nor accordant with the views of the church. It follows, therefore, that we recur to the interpretation which we have given, and which we have no hesitation in declaring not only to be the plain, simple, and satisfactory meaning of the service, but also to be most encouraging to parents and sponsors for the children, as well as to the children in after life for themselves. It gives or ought to give a tone of character to the whole of education. The parent looks on his little one as God's adopted, God's own, His by purchase through the blood of his dear Son, and His by gracious admission into all the blessings of the

covenant. The child is fellow heir with the parent. The parent does not look upon it as in the death-state in Adam, but as in the state of privilege and hope and life in Christ. When he sees the manifestations of evil tempers he looks on them as a violation of the privileges, and a kind of moral denial of the state into which his child is called. He teaches his child to say "Our Father"* because God is really his Father in Christ; and to call Christ his Redeemer because Christ has really redeemed him, the individual child, from the curse of the law; and the Spirit his sanctifier, because he has been set apart and consecrated by the Holy Spirit, of which consecration baptism is the seal; and he knows that in every effort that he makes for his child that good Spirit is helping and upholding him, and acting on the child's mind, though the child may be rebellious and resist.

*Misap-
prehension
of the real
blessings of
baptism a
cause of
great
evil to
children.*

We believe that it is because parents have overlooked these things, and have educated their children as children of wrath rather than as children of grace, that so many have really turned out to be that which they have been called. The spring of love in their young hearts has not been touched; they

* In the primitive church no one that had not been baptized was allowed to use the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer is truly the disciples' prayer—it was given to the disciples, and is to be used by all who, after them, are disciples. It is much to be wished, that when the prayer is used in family worship, the whole number present should join in it, for all who are baptized members of the church are disciples.

have not been taught to look at their baptism as God's own appointed and certain seal of kindness and adopting love, and so they have grown up to regard him rather as a hard and passionless Master than as a holy and loving Father.

Objection It may be said by the baptist, that *which may be made by the baptist, answered.* he can bring up his child to the same view of the love of God. But this, most certainly, he cannot do; for it is the very doubt, which is in his mind, of God's covenant blessings being the child's right, which leads him to deny it baptism, which is the seal of those blessings.

Great difference between the teaching of children under the church system, and under that of the baptists. The baptist makes the first motion for baptismal privilege to be in the man, the church believes and declares it to be in God through his free grace and favour to Christians and their seed. The baptist can point his child to the cross in Calvary, and we would not speak lightly of his power to do so—it is an immeasurable blessing; but he cannot tell his child as we can tell ours—“*You have been received* into the congregation of Christ's church; you have been signed with the sign of the cross, the mark and seal of Christ is on your brow; the privileges of the new covenant are all yours; you are not to ascend into heaven to bring Christ down from above, or to descend into Hades to bring up Christ from below: the Word of God and His Spirit is nigh you, only do not drive it away, only do not refuse its aid, and then you shall possess that which you are *rightfully* heir to, the kingdom of glory.”

Objection of men of cold philosophy to the idea of a state of privilege. It is a vain thing for men to say in answer to all this—"What is the use of a privileged state? Privileges are not graces, and we value nothing but that which is really efficacious." It is the character, undoubtedly, of the present age, an age of hard philosophy and somewhat cold sectarianism to think and reason after this manner. And the consequence is (and it is a very fatal consequence) that men of a different cast of mind have been driven to an opposite extreme, and that they have been led to advocate views in many respects, we fear, very nearly approximating to those of the idolatrous church, against which our own protests; and because all mystery is denied by their opponents, they seem too much inclined to find mystery in every thing. We wish to keep the middle line of Scripture, and without thinking of the one side or the other, to show to protestant Christians, who are indeed the only catholic Christians, the great value of their privileges.

Answer to the objections above. The cold reasoner may say—what is the use of the influence of the Holy Spirit promised and sealed in baptism, if it does not convert the child's heart?

We answer by another question. Is there no grace but that which is irresistible? Is it impossible to quench the Spirit? Is not rebellion against God's grace the condemnation of man? Is not sin in a Christian land the "not believing in Christ?" John xvi. 9. We can conceive in natural things how an influence may be ex-

erted without an effect *apparently* resulting: the wind may breathe upon the sails of a vessel, and yet the vessel may not move; its weight in the water may present a resistance such as the wind is not sufficient to overcome.

Case of operation of Holy Ghost on child's heart illustrated by wind and vessel.

So is it in things spiritual. The resistance is the heart's corruption.

But as we know that the breathing of the wind on the sails, though ineffectual in actually putting the vessel in motion, would make it more easy to move it, so the parent may be comforted by knowing that the influence

of the Spirit on the heart of his child, though not absolutely an influence of conversion, is cooperating with his lessons, and making it more easy for him to bring up his child to God. And it is the knowledge of this truth, as we have before observed, that gives or should give to parents and to teachers the greatest support and confidence in their otherwise most trying business of education: it is, in fact, the only view which will enable them to educate *in faith*.

Extract from a sermon of Luther's

We cannot better close this reasoning, than by an extract from one of Luther's sermons:—"And hereby the nature of a true and right faith is taught, for it is nothing which some say 'I believe in God Almighty,' as the Jews and many others are wont, and do therefore receive corporal benefits from God: it is a true and lively faith, whereby thou believest in God howbeit by Jesus Christ. First, that thou doubt not that God is become a merciful Father unto

thee, which hath pardoned all thy sins and in baptism hath adopted thee for his son and heir, that thou mayest certainly know that thou art saved; again thou must also know this, that *that* was not done gratuitously, neither without satisfaction made to divine justice, for there can be no place in thee for the divine grace and mercy to work salvation and to give thee eternal good things, unless the justice of God be before most fully satisfied: for Christ witnesseth, (Matt. v. 18,) “one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.”—*Sermon on Justification by grace without works.*

Luther's view the same as that of the catechism.

The reader should remark the strength and peculiarity of the expressions here made use of; they seem almost an echo by anticipation of the language of the catechism. Pardon, adoption and the real ground of assurance of faith, are here asserted to be the fruits and effects of baptism, which is God's appointed ordinance to seal these blessings to the soul. It should not be overlooked, that the extract is from a sermon on *Salvation by grace without works.*

This view not opposed (but the contrary), to salvation by grace without works, or to justification by faith.

We see hence, that the view of baptism and baptismal blessings given above, did not, at least in the opinion of the great German reformer, conflict with that doctrine, neither did it, as we may see in the same extract, with the doctrine of Justification by Faith. Luther evidently considered the ordinance of baptism to be that which we have

above defined it, a seal of pardon, adoption, and grace ; a seal of the blessings of the new covenant allowed in great mercy to man, whereby he might build more firmly his faith on the word and promise of God, seeing himself, by that admission seal, put as it were into possession of the title deeds of his inheritance.

*Baptism
God's seal
to man, not
man's seal
to God.* We see, moreover, in this extract a confirmation of that which we have asserted above, that baptism is the seal of God's grace to man, not the seal, according to the baptist's view, of man's profession to God ; it is as it were God's bow in the spiritual heaven, declaring to each baptized person His favour, kindness, pardon, and adopting love.

We may add that there is no view which is more strongly opposed than this to the frightful tenet of the unpardonable character of sins committed after baptism. That tenet destroys altogether the paternal character of God, and the filial privilege of man. It was the complaint of Luther, in lecturing his divinity students, that from having been brought up to look at God as an exacting judge, to be appeased only by the works and sufferings of man, he could scarcely even then bring himself practically to feel that which he strongly held that God really was, *his Father reconciled in Christ Jesus*. The sad notion above alluded to would bring all men back to the same melancholy state of uncomfortable and dark apprehension.

General view of the use of sponsors. But again, the baptist asks—what is the use of sponsors? (1.) I answer they are of the same use to the child's soul as nurses are to the child's body. They are to help the parents to bring up the child for heaven. When sponsors were first adopted in the Christian church there were great persecutions,* and they were provided in order that if the parents should be cut off by persecution, they might take up the little orphans that were left, and bring them up in the Christian faith. (2.) They are also retained in order to bear witness to God's mercy in sealing to the child the privileges of the covenant, and to be as it were *the voice of the child*. They answer as if they were actually the child himself, and make those promises on the child's part which the child is on his own part bound to make when he comes to years of discretion.

Objection made by baptists to the promises of children through sponsors, answered. The baptists sometimes say that it is mockery in godfathers and godmothers to promise that for the child which they can have no certain knowledge that the child will perform. Now this objection is founded on a mistaken view of the duties of parents and guardians towards their children, as well as of the obligations of every baptized person to God. For it must never be forgotten that the parents are the authorized guardians of their child; God has made them so; it is His ordinance, and they are bound to do their best for their children.

* See a larger account of the origin of Sponsors from the Custom of the Jewish Church, in part iv.

Now the best they can do is to give that which Christ claims for them, admission into the covenant—to put them into the family of Christ, to have them sealed in baptism as being rightful heirs of heaven. It is by God's free grace that all this is permitted. God freely takes the children of Christians into covenant with Him. "The promise is unto Christians and to their children," Acts ii. 30. And this great grace and mercy flows from the love of God in Christ, or in other words, it is the purchase of the death of Christ.

The child is bound to make the baptismal promises. But then, says the baptist—even if God does take the child into covenant, what right have you to promise that the child shall obey? We answer that the child is bound to obey whether the promise is made or no; and if the parents or sponsors accept the benefit for the child they are bound to promise that the child shall do his part. The child is not brought under any new duty or obligation, he is bound to promise what the godfather promises for him. Christ has redeemed the child's soul from slavery and from death, and in consequence the child owes all he has to the Deliverer.

This illustrated by the case of an estate. We can see this in temporal matters. Suppose a great man were to promise an estate to your child on condition that the child should always live on the property: What parent would refuse to promise that he should do so? Now it might happen that the child when he should grow up might be wild and thoughtless, and might refuse to do what his father promised. It is very true that he would

forfeit his estate because of his folly, but every one will see that the father was right in making the promise which he did, on the presumption that his son would not turn out to be a fool or a madman.

The obligation rests, however, on far deeper grounds. But the obligation rests on far higher ground than this. An obligation does not become a whit more obligatory by being openly and solemnly declared. If I am bound, as bound I am, to love God with all my heart, and my neighbour as myself, I do not more strongly bind myself to these duties by declaring that I will perform them; or if it is my duty not to murder a man, I do not make it in the least more so by saying that I will not be a murderer. Neither would my parent or my godfather have increased my obligation if, when I was baptized, he had promised that I should love my God and should not murder my neighbour. The truth is that as a human being, created by God and redeemed by Christ, and sealed by the Holy Spirit to heavenly privileges in baptism, I am

Promise does not increase the obligation. *bound to love God: no promise, no words, no oath, can bind me more.* If it is right to baptize infants it cannot

be wrong to make the promises. For by baptism a child is made, by privilege, a child of God, and a child of God is as deeply bound to love *his* Father and hate the world as a child of man is bound to love *his* father and take part against that father's enemies. Admit, therefore, the propriety of infant baptism and the propriety of the sponsors' promises follows at once.

No one may deny the right of sponsors to promise for him. It is a vain thing, therefore, for grown-up persons to object that their sponsors made promises for them which they themselves knew nothing of, and that, therefore, they are not bound by them; for on the contrary they *are* bound to those very things, whether those promises be made or no. A man may, indeed, be come an apostate, Heb. x. 29, "and tread under foot the Son of God. and count the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of Grace," but instead of freeing himself from baptismal obligations by this awful conduct, he only binds its bands closer around him, and turns them from the golden cords of love into the iron bands of condemnation.

The child makes the promises and not the sponsors. We may thus put the argument respecting the promises made by children through their sponsors; first remarking that it should be particularly noticed that the words of the service clearly shew that the church has no thought of any promise being made by the sponsors, but looks at *every promise as made by the child.* For the language is as follows:—"This infant must also faithfully for his part *promise* by you that are his sureties," &c. Now it is evident that if the surety or sponsor were the person promising, it would not have been expressed in this way, but as follows: "*you that are sureties must promise,*" &c. I make this observation because from experience, in a large parish I know how often Christians, especially among

the poor, shrink from the office of sponsor, from fear of the burden of a promise which may not be performed. There is no burden of this sort laid on the sponsor; he is only *the voice*, so to speak, of the child, he only enunciates that which the child as a partaker of the privileges of the covenant, is himself under a moral obligation to promise; and this is an obligation from which he (the child) cannot by any possible artifice or reasoning, on the part of his friends at that time or on his own part in after life, be delivered.

Proof that But to return. To explain the rea-
baptized sonableness of requiring promises to
child is be made by children, who have as
bound to yet no power to will or to choose, we
make the must remember what follows:
promises.

1st.—*Salvation is entirely of grace*, Isaiah, vii. 13, 14, “And he said, hear ye now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign, behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” And xxviii. 15, 16. “Because ye have said, we have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falshood have we hid ourselves: therefore, thus saith the Lord God, behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” Eph. ii. 8—10. “For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that

not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The two passages in Isaiah, expanding themselves from the case of Israel to that of the whole world, beautifully show the love of God freely putting itself forth to remedy the self-destruction of man at the very time that he is in the deepest rebellion.

2nd.—*Every man is a slave.* Rom. vi. 16—18. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Every man by descent from Adam is a slave of sin and satan (for servant in the New Testament invariably means slave.) But Christ has paid the price for the slaves, and therefore now every man is by right his property, as a slave is the property of his master. Rom. v. 18, 19. "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners: so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." Here the universality of the proposition is declared; and 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a

price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Here the absolute ownership of Christ is set forth.

3.—*A slave has no choice or right of choice whether he will serve his master or no.* Every thing which the slave has, his strength, time, talents, &c., are his master's property. But if this be so, the infant that is taken into covenant with Christ, and so made partaker of the benefits of his death, is the *bondslave* of Christ, and therefore he is *bound* to renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, his old masters, and to serve his new and blessed master Jesus Christ.

4.—*Now if I am under a moral obligation to perform an action, I do not in the least increase the force of that obligation by promising to do it.* For instance, if I owe my neighbour money, I am bound to pay it, whether I promise to pay it or not; and I am just as much bound to pay it if I *do not* promise as if I *do* promise; and on the other hand I do not make myself in the least degree more a debtor by promising to pay than I was before I promised. Apply this to baptism. By being put into the covenant I owe all I have to Jesus my Master. Nothing can free me from this debt; and it is evident that by promising to pay it, that is, by promising "to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil," I do not increase my obligation to renounce them. Indeed I *cannot increase it*, for the obligation is as deep as it can be,—as deep as the love of Christ,—a depth which no line can fathom.

5.—But it may be said that a man is free to accept or free to reject the benefits of Christ's

death, and that we know not but that the baptized infant *may* reject them. I answer that *he is not free to act, but on the contrary he is bound to accept them.* For man is not as he was in paradise; he has forfeited his liberty, and he is and must be henceforth a slave for ever: he was first, as has been stated, the slave of Satan, by having sold himself to him for false money, and he is now the slave, by right of purchase, of Christ, who has paid the true coin of his own precious blood for him. Now he cannot escape from this second bondage; for even though he may continue to be the bondslave of satan he is by right of purchase the property of Christ: *he is bought whether he will or no.* For it must be remembered that God did not consult man on the atonement. He did not ask mankind whether they would be redeemed, but he paid the purchase-money, and so obtained the right to the slave. No man can therefore say—I have a *right* to accept or reject the offer. It is true that he has the *power* but it is not true that he has the *right*: he may, by the fatal power which he has of ruining himself, reject God's mercy; but in doing so he tramples underfoot the blood of the covenant, and multiplies his condemnation a thousand fold.

This, therefore, is the reason why it is perfectly lawful that the child, though not come to reason, may promise to renounce the devil, and more than this, why it is absolutely his duty to do it.

Unlawful practice of 6.—The baptists sometimes say that Christ blessed the little ones, and

the baptists in blessing the children without baptizing them. that although it is not lawful to baptize them it is lawful to bring them to Christ for a blessing; and in accordance with this they are often instructed by their teachers to bring the little infants to be named and prayed over. The only objection, and it is a *fatal* one, to this practice is that there is only one way in which God authorizes human beings to approach to Him, and *that is a covenant way.* The heathen are said and rightly said to be left to the *uncovenanted* mercies of God; the children of baptists are, by their parents' fault, in the same condition; they have no right to call God their Father in Christ, because they are not within the sacred precincts of the Christian covenant. The appellatives, moreover, of children so named cannot be called Christian names, for a Christian name is that which a child receives when he becomes a member of the family of Christ, and these children are not made members of this family.

It should be remembered that the little ones whom Jesus blessed were *already in covenant* with him by circumcision, and that, therefore, *there is no similarity between their case and that of those who are brought to Him without having been first put into the covenant.*

Duties of sponsors. Some few words may here be appropriately added in regard to the duties of sponsors. The writer has heard it objected by conscientious persons that the duties of sponsors are too heavy, and the responsibility too great, for them to undertake, unless they could possess a greater power of superintend-

ance in the education of their godchildren, than, ordinarily speaking, they are likely to have. To this difficulty it may be answered—

1st.—That a sponsor is not *in loco parentis*; he does not take the parents' place; the parents are still the responsible persons notwithstanding the aid and alliance of sponsors.

2ndly.—Persons who are requested to be sponsors should certainly stipulate for a right to ascertain that the child is in a proper course of Christian instruction. They cannot perform the office at all, according to the view of the church, without this. It is their "part and duty to see that the infant be taught so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession, he made by them." If, however, they have full confidence in the parents, it is to the parents, they must remember, that God has committed the education of the child, and they may, therefore, rightly leave these matters ordinarily in *their* hands, only taking that Christian and quasi-parental interest in the child, to which their ecclesiastical relationship most certainly entitles them.

3rdly.—Should circumstances remove the children far away from them still there are always means of communication. A sponsor should never lose sight of his godchild; he should always remember him, whether present or distant, before the throne of grace; he is spiritually allied to him: and what faithful man can doubt but that the Holy Spirit will be moved peculiarly to aid and assist in the

guidance of that little one whom his sponsors shall continually intercede for ?

4thly.—In cases where there is reason to fear that the parents are altogether neglecting the spiritual interests of the children, it is undoubtedly the duty of the sponsors to interfere as far as they can without violating altogether the relations and harmonies of domestic life, in order to prevent such injury to their godchildren. It is just as much their duty to do this as it is that of the Courts of Chancery to interfere in defence of the persons of its wards, or to prevent the violation or waste of entailed estates.

Hence we see, partly, the use of sponsors, and how, as it is the duty of parents to bring the little children to receive the benefits of the covenant, it is that of the sponsors to promise, at the same time, that they shall walk according to faith in Christ Jesus, renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devil, and the sinful lusts of the flesh, and that they shall believe all the articles of the Christian faith.

Short recapitulation. IV.—But again, we have said in a preceding page, that the baptists object that there is no express command to baptize children. And it has been shown that in reality the command to circumcise the children of Abraham is a command to baptize the children of Christians, because the covenant of Abraham is just as much the covenant of grace as the Christian covenant, and if the promise is to the children under one covenant, it must be under the other, because, in truth, both the one and the other are *the same identical covenant*.

The ana- V.—But there is another answer
baptist which is perfectly conclusive. We say
must prove on our parts that *if children were not to*
that our *be baptized, our blessed Saviour would*
Lord for- *have told us so.* And, therefore, instead
bid the of the baptist asking us for a command
baptism of to baptize infants, we have a right to
children. ask him to show us a command *not* to baptize
 them. This is plain when we consider that
 the covenant of Abraham was the covenant of
 grace and faith, and therefore the same cove-
 nant as that of Jesus Christ in the gospel. The
 only change is in the greater clearness with
 which Christ is manifested and preached, and in
 the seal, which it has pleased God to alter from
 the bloody rite of circumcision to the purifying
 and mild rite of baptism. And if this be true,
 as most surely it is, may we not rather ask
 where we are commanded not to baptize infants?
 For suppose, by way of illustration, a case like
 the following, (it may seem too familiar, but it
Illustra- will not on that account be inadmissi-
tion from ble) it was formerly the custom to in-
the innocu- noculate children for the small pox,
lation of but now it is the practice to vaccinate
children. them (that is) to inoculate them for the cow
 pox. Suppose that vaccination were only proper
 for grown people, would it not be *expressly*
 forbidden for children? Every one must per-
 ceive that it would be so; for otherwise there
 would be a danger lest people who had been in
 the habit of inoculating children, when they
 discovered that vaccination was put in the place of
 inoculation, should certainly vaccinate them.

It is plain, therefore, that if vaccination were proper for little children nothing need be said about it; but if it were *improper* for them it would be *expressly* mentioned and *forbidden*.

Now apply this to circumcision and baptism. Baptism takes the place of circumcision, just as vaccination takes the place of inoculation. Circumcision was applied to children; there is no command not to apply baptism to children. But if it were wrong to baptize children there would be a command not to baptize them; but the baptist cannot show us any such command; hence as we find no command *not* to baptize them, we conclude justly that it is right that they should be baptized.

Case of converted Jewish parents and their probable thoughts. Again we would put another case. If the converted Jews had not been allowed to baptize their children, they would most certainly have made great complaints about it. For they would have reasoned something in this way—
 “When I was a Jew I was allowed to put my
 “child into covenant with God; but now I am
 “a Christian you tell me that I must leave my
 “poor little one to His uncovenanted mercy. I
 “thought that the gospel dispensation was mark-
 “ed by larger privileges and greater grace? But
 “how can this be if my poor child was allowed to
 “be put into covenant with God by circumcision,
 “but is not permitted to be put into covenant with
 “Him by baptism?” Now it would be quite rea-
 sonable for the converted Jew to make this com-
 plaint, if his child were not allowed to be baptized.
 For if this were true his child would have had

greater privileges as a Jew than he could have as a Christian. It is easy to see how strong such an argument as this would have been in the mouths of the judaizing Galatian converts. We may conclude, therefore, that since we find no complaint of this kind, there was no cause for such complaint, *but that the children of converted Jews were received into covenant by baptism.*

Assertion But, again it is said, that the first *that early* converted Christians were baptists, and Jesus Christ himself was the first baptist. Now to say that* Jesus Christ was a baptist is both weak and ignorant. It is true that Jesus Christ was baptized, but then it was with *John's baptism.* He never was baptized at all with Christian baptism. And it may well be asked, how could he be baptized in his own name, for Christian baptism is in the name of the Son as well as the Father and the Holy Ghost?

* A baptist teacher in the town in which the author lives, actually persuaded a woman to be re-baptized in the Meeting-house, by telling her of the baptism of Christ, and reading her the words, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." It certainly is a matter of surprise that one who thought himself capable of teaching others should have been so ignorant. Let him read Acts xix. 3--5. He will there see that John's baptism was totally different from the baptism ordained by Christ, and that those who had been baptized in John's baptism were baptized afterwards according to the baptism of Christ. There may, perhaps, be some semblance of reason for confining John's baptism to adults, because it is the baptism of repentance, and none could repent who could not understand; but the baptism of our blessed Lord is for the remission of sins, and this is of free grace to

Evidence from early history. But if it be said that the early Christians were baptists, by which it is meant that they did not baptize their children, I would ask when the baptism of children first began? We know well that this question cannot satisfactorily be answered; for *as early as we can read any thing about the church we read of the baptism of children.*

One of the first controversies is that respecting the *exact time* of baptizing children, whether it should be on the eighth day, as circumcision had been, or on some other day. Now it is evident that when a dispute is only about the *manner* of doing a thing, the thing itself is allowed on all hands as right to be done. So this very controversy about the proper day of baptizing infants shows that it was an universal practice to baptize or christen them.

Time of the introduction of heresies known. We may also add that no error is without a beginning, and that no error has ever crept into the Church Catholic without its being well known when it

children, according to the promise, and yet it will be seen in examining the account of the baptism of John (4th part) that there is every reason to conclude that the whole people with their wives and *little ones* were all baptized by John. We fear, however, that such abuse of Scripture truth can scarcely be attributed to ignorance. It seems almost impossible to suppose that any educated person should read the Scriptures with care and seriousness, and then teach the poor and ignorant, that because our blessed Saviour, born a Jew, was baptized at thirty years of age with John's baptism, that therefore, the children who are Christians by descent, must wait to be baptized with Christian baptism till they are of maturer years.

began.* We know when the setting up of worshipping images in churches began. We know when the error of transubstantiation began; but if the baptizing of little children be an error none can tell when the error began. We therefore conclude that it is not an error, but that it prevailed from the time of Christ and His apostles.

Modern growth of the sect called "baptist," and their small numbers. And here, in the last place, I would earnestly entreat the persons who call themselves baptists, to consider how they are setting up their own unsupported opinions against the whole body of the church general. Every church acknowledges and practices infant baptism. The eastern or Greek church, the western or Latin church, the Syrian church, the Abyssinian church, the protestant churches at home and abroad, all hold sacred the rite of infant baptism; and a few† baptists are the only persons that dissent from the general practice and belief. These doctrines were never heard of till the time of the anabaptists of Munster,‡ a wild

* We know that there was no such title as universal Bishop or Pope, until 600 years after Christ. That the doctrine of transubstantiation had no authorized existence until the Lateran Council, A. D., 1215, that the cup was not denied to the laity until the Council of Constance, A. D. 1414, and that the doctrine of purgatory was not formally recognized till A. D., 1545, at the Council of Trent.

† They are truly only "a few," a mere handful when compared with the many millions that make up the remaining part of the Christian church.

‡ It is true that in the twelfth century a few persons doubted of the propriety of infant baptism. They were

sect that very much endangered the success of the reformation by their great extravagancies. Is it reasonable to suppose that they are right, and that all the rest of the Christian body are wrong? If it be so how is the promise of our Lord to His church fulfilled, (“the gates of hell shall not prevail against it?”) If infant baptism *usurped* the place of adult baptism, if century after century rolled along and still the usurpation lasted, if it prevailed not in one section of the church like the Romish errors, but in every section, in the Greek, the Armenian, the Syrian, the Abyssinian, so that throughout all the churches of the world, the truth as it regards baptism had utterly perished, and error had universally taken its place, and brooded over the whole of Christendom, how can it with any fair shew of truth be said that Christ’s promise to his church was kept *either in the instance above quoted or in that other, which is no less strong*—“*that He would lead the church by the Spirit into all truth?*” *For to this day there is not one single great branch of the church catholic, that with every desire to be led into truth, has*

answered by Petrus Claniacensis. He tells them that if they were right in their doubts, then the consequence is, that all Europe has not had a person for the last three hundred, or perhaps four hundred years, baptized, and that, therefore, there is not a Christian (sealed with the seal appointed by Christ) in Europe.

It was somewhere about that time that the conversions from the Heathen ceased. This is the reason of the cessation of adult baptism. As there were no converts from heathenism there could be no adult person baptized.

been conducted into this which they declare to be a catholic verity.

Funda- mental In all other matters the great funda-
truths have mental truths have been ever catholic*
been catho- truths, truths of universal acceptation;
lic truths. error, undoubtedly, has crept in, and
 in some instances it has been like the
 rank luxuriance of ivy, hiding, shadowing, and
 in its killing embrace well nigh destroying the
 truth; but it is a general fact, and as true as it
 is general, that the cardinal doctrines of the
 Trinity in Unity, the Godhead and manhood of
 Christ, the influence of the Holy Ghost, the
 atonement and justification,† and the *corrup-
 tion* and helplessness and alienation of the heart
 of man, have been universally recognized in the
 creeds and confessions of all the great branches
 of the church of Christ.

No hope But again, if children have *no right*
for child- to baptism they can have *no claim* to
ren on the salvation. For none can be saved but
ground those who are in covenant with God.
taken by “If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abra-
the “bap- ham’s seed, and heirs according to the
tist.”

* Now certainly there can nothing of more weight be
 said against religion than that it is new. Jewel Apol. ch.
 v.—“It is a free challenge betwixt us—let the elder have
 us both—shew us more credit and age, and carrie it.”—
 BISHOP HALL.

† We must make some exception in regard to justifica-
 tion by faith. Faber has ably shewn that it was held to
 the twelfth century, even in the Romish church. From
 that time it was entirely obscured, until the time of the
 blessed reformation, when it became in the hands of the

promise." The church following the Scripture, pronounces all the seed of Christians to be holy, and admits them to baptism. The baptists say they are not holy, and so have no right to baptism. But if they have no right to baptism, not being holy, by what title can they enter heaven? They are in no better state than the heathen. This is and always must be an insuperable difficulty in the way of the doctrines of the baptists. It may be no great difficulty to those who have long held the baptist errors, and yet it is difficult to conceive how even such, if they are parents, can bear to see their little ones growing up entire aliens from the covenant. To all others it should ever be an insurmountable objection, for it makes the Christian scheme a law of slavery instead of liberty—a scheme of death instead of life. True, indeed, it is that under the Abrahamic covenant, circumcision was a bloody rite, but then in the very blood of the infant was the written assurance of God's covenant love; but take away baptism from the infant, and then, though it is true he no longer sheds the blood of circumcision, yet with the blood he has lost his hope; and the little Jewish child is a sealed inheritor of all the glorious promises of God to Abraham, while the child of the Christian is a wretched outcast, without seal, sign, hope, or privilege.

Saxon reformer, the talisman of mighty power, to destroy error and revive truth. Even during the dark ages, however, it found advocates in the heart of the valleys, and the lamp though obscured was not quite put out.

Summary. If they should have some difficulties; if they should be unable to see that which to most others is so very plain, (*viz.*) that baptism is Christian circumcision, that it is what St. Paul (Col. ii. 11.) calls “the circumcision made without hands,”* still ought not the universal consent of the whole Christian church in this matter to make them doubtful of their own opinion? Let me remind them that it has been clearly proved that circumcision has nothing whatever to do with the Mosaic *covenant*—it is on the contrary God’s own seal of the covenant of grace and promise to Abraham. The covenant of Moses came after that, but it could not alter it or render it ineffectual. This the Apostle Paul tells us in so many words, Gal. iii. 17,—“And this I say that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” Here we see that the covenant of Abraham is called the covenant of *God in Christ*, and that though the law came between Abraham and Christ, yet it could not alter the character of the covenant of Abraham which was a covenant of grace and of Christ.

This, we repeat, shows the baptist that circumcision has nothing whatever to do with the law of Moses, and hence that *circumcision and*

* It is most evident that this expression refers to baptism—indeed the whole of the remainder of that and the whole of the following chapter is grounded on baptism, its privileges and its responsibilities.—See ch. iii. v. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, &c.

baptism are both seals of the same covenant of grace and of faith.

Expression of Calvin respecting baptists. And I would more especially appeal to baptist parents in behalf of their children. Calvin says that the ana-

baptists make God a hard or cruel father of little children, (*durus pater infantium*). If God graciously allowed, nay, if he not only allowed but commanded parents of old to put their children into covenant with him, is He changed?—is he less gracious to Christians than he was to the Israelites, or was it possible that a child could enter into covenant with God in ancient Israel, and is it *impossible* for a child to enter into covenant with God in Christian England? The Scripture moreover declares that “God willeth all men to be saved;” but the refusal of the baptist to have his child baptized, shews most certainly that he doubts whether God does not really desire his child’s salvation, that is, *he doubts whether God is in Christ a reconciled father.*

The baptist dogma unchurches all our ancestors. We leave this part of the subject with these questions. We confess that the more we reflect upon the baptist heresy, the more strange, the more unnatural, the more contradictory to the sympathies of the heart, as well as to the principles of the gospel it appears. It not only denies to the children of Christians the privileges of the Christian covenant, but it consigns by a tremendous retrospective anathema every buried member of every Catholic church to the uncovenanted mercies of God. If the baptist

dogma be true, there is not a single covenant Christian buried in the church yards of Christian England. The dead lie in their consecrated beds with their feet to the East, and their faces to the rising of the sun, awaiting the coming of the Lord, and placed so as to catch in awaking on their reviving countenances the first beams of his rising glory—but they are not one of them in the covenant says the baptist; they have not entered into a covenant relation to God by His own appointed way, for their baptism was no baptism at all: nay, even the martyrs that in their fiery cradles strangled the serpents of Romish heresy, even they, the great and glorious fathers of the Reformation, were never in Christ's visible kingdom on earth; for the only way of entering into His visible kingdom is by baptism, and they were not baptized. These consequences will always prevent this heresy from being even nearly universally received, even if the pledge of Christ to his church for the truth did not stand in its way. But the heresy is vigorously pushed by its advocates, and it derives great strength from the inattention of the advocates of the truth. It is necessary that the clergy should teach their flocks the blessings and the responsibilities of infant baptism. We warmly approve the title which Mr. Budd has given to his work.

Call to the clergy to baptize as prescribed in the rubric. Infant baptism is, we truly believe with him, "the means of national regeneration." We would exhort all parents, sponsors, and ministers, and the young themselves, to consider this: Let baptism be again administered, as presented

in the rubric, in the course of the service in the church; let sermons be preached at the time; let the prayers of the congregation be solicited; let the people be pleaded with on their baptismal obligations; let the worldling be remonstrated with, and the faithful be comforted by their recollection; and we doubt not but that a mighty and general result will follow in the real vital effectual regeneration of the kingdom.

CHAP. IV.

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

“ Almighty God, who hast given us Thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end.”—Collect for Christmas Day.

It is of the greatest importance to the subject that we are considering that we should have clear notions of the points which are disputed.

That a *baptismal regeneration* of some kind is implied necessarily in the baptismal service it is not possible to doubt. But it is often said that the language of the services is that of charity and hope, or such as would be true if every thing was rightly done and in faith, or such as may hereafter become true. For a consideration of the views on which these statements are based I would refer the reader to pp. 62—66. It is in the Article on Baptism that we must certainly look for the orderly and logical decision of the church on this most important subject, and to the article we would therefore, in the first place, apply ourselves.

Now the first clause of this Article runs thus—“*Baptism* is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christian men are discerned from others”—

Here then the church declares that baptism is a distinguishing mark of Christian men, but that it has a higher character than that of merely making such distinction. What that higher character is the next and remaining part of the Article explains.

“But it is also a sign of regeneration or new birth, whereby as by an instrument they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the church, the promises of forgiveness of sins and of an adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God.”*

* The following are some of the principal passages on which the opinion of the church that baptism is more than a sign of profession may be clearly supposed to rest.

1st.—The coupling together of water and the Holy Ghost in John iii.

2nd.—The presence of the Holy Ghost brooding over the water at the baptism of our Lord. To this the church refers in the baptismal service.

3rd.—The fiery baptism at Pentecost, connected with the special promise of the sending of the Holy Ghost. John xvi. 7—14.

4th.—The announcement of John Baptist, “I indeed baptize with water.” “He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

5th.—The coupling of the water of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Titus iii. v. 5.

6th.—The declaration 1 Cor. xii. 13, “That we are all baptized by one spirit, and have been all made to drink into one spirit.”

Now here the first clause contains the definition which the Church gives of baptism. It is a sign or mark (*signum*) of regeneration or new birth, *i.e.*, it is a sign or mark that he is regenerated. But what is the meaning of this? Undoubtedly the words which follow declare. And first, it is like *engrafting*, *i.e.*, it resembles it in this, that a foreign shoot or twig is put into a stock not its own: the parallel is, that the child, which is a stranger to Christ, is put into the body of Christ's church, it is made a member of Christ; and this is the reason why the name then given is called a *Christian name*. But to be a member of Christ is to be a rightful sharer of the promised forgiveness of sins and of adoption. The baptizing, therefore, of an individual, whether child or adult, since it is the grafting him into the church, is the sealing of the forgiveness of his sins and the adopting him as a child of God.*

7th.—Also the text, Ephv. ²⁶~~25~~—6. “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.”

8th.—Perhaps too the peculiar connection in which the word “sealing” is found, when coupled with the fact that it was used by the earliest Christian writers as a synonyme for baptism.

9th.—Lastly, the fact that this is the dispensation of the Spirit according to the promise of our Lord, (John xvi. 7.)

* This is in strict accordance with the definition of the sacraments in the twenty-fifth Article. “They be not only badges or tokens of Christian mens’ profession, but rather they be certain *sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God’s good will to us*, by the which he doth work invisibly in us,” &c.

This is the baptismal regeneration of the Article; and it is evident that the church intends that some *real* benefit is sealed to the child, and not merely that a *sign* of something which may hereafter take place is given; for this would be making baptism to be no more than “a distinguishing mark of Christian men,” which the Article has already expressly declared to be a very insufficient view. When, therefore, it is said, as it sometimes is said, that it is merely a *sign of a promise*, (that is,) that it is a sign that if a man repents he will be forgiven, a statement is made which most certainly is incommensurate with the words of the Article. The Article (it must never be forgotten) is framed primarily for adults, and the baptized adult is supposed to have repentance and faith, and thus washes, like St. Paul, his sins away in baptism; for the admission into covenant with Christ cancels every debt. It is exactly the same with the infant, “for the promise is to you and to your children,” the same to the children of Christians as to Christians themselves; they are regenerated, (*i.e.*) they are made members of the regeneration (Matt. xix. 28) with all its accompanying privileges.

Explanation of the term regeneration, as given in the church services.

Having thus considered briefly the language of the Article, let us next consider the Services. This is so well done by a friend of the Author's in a small tract, that he has transferred a main part of his reasoning, with some alterations, into this work. The words of the tract are, with some variations, as follows:

“The church of England having used the word regenerate in her three baptismal services, in the service for confirmation, and also in the twenty-seventh Article; if any doubt exists as to the meaning intended to be attached to it, we naturally look into them to see if they contain any explanation. In the Article it is explained by the words, “The new birth;” and baptism itself spoken of as that “whereby they that receive it rightly are grafted into the church; the promises of forgiveness of sins, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are *visibly signed and sealed*”—words which afford some clue to its intended meaning.

“In the first address (Off. of Publ. Bapt.), after stating the necessity of regeneration, the congregation are called on to pray for it on behalf of the infant, and it is called “that thing which by nature he (the child) cannot have,” and it is explained to be “*baptism with water and the Holy Ghost,*” “introduction into Christ’s holy church,” and “the being made a lively member of the same.” In the second prayer, the congregation ask, as the necessary consequence of coming to baptism, that the child “may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration.” In the exhortation grounded upon the portion of the gospel of St. Mark, and in answer to their previous prayers, the congregation are bid “not to doubt, but earnestly believe, that God will favourably receive the infant, embrace him with the arms of His mercy, give the blessing of eternal life, and make him partaker of His eternal kingdom.” In the

prayer preceding the naming of the child, they pray that this child may receive the fulness of God's grace, and ever *remain in* the number of His faithful and elect children.

“But if more explicit interpretation of the word be needed, it is given in the declaration after the child is baptized: “Seeing. . . that this child *is regenerate*, and grafted into the body of Christ's church;” coupled with the prayer, “that it may lead the rest of its life according *to this beginning*;” a prayer utterly inconsistent with the belief that no real blessing has been conferred. After which comes a thanksgiving, that the child is regenerated *with God's Holy Spirit*, and received for His own by adoption, followed by a prayer that he may *realize* in a true death to sin and a true living to righteousness, all those great blessings to which baptism has given him a *real* title.

“In the service of confirmation the Church prays that God, “*Having* vouchsafed to regenerate these His servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and *having* given unto them forgiveness of all their sins, will *strengthen* them with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and increase (not ‘begin’) his gifts in them.”

“While, to complete the whole, a declaration is appended to the service, that it is certain by God's word that children which are baptized dying before they commit actual sin are undoubtedly saved?

“It would seem, then, that even were the word “regeneration” expunged from all the four services and the articles, their meaning would be

the same—an explicit declaration of the sealing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the infant in baptism.

“But many members of the Church of England, who, disbelieving such a declaration, are anxious to shew, that whilst officially declaring it, she did not mean to assert that it was in all cases the fact, have supposed the difficulty removed in the following manner: “The church catechism has” (they say), “laid down repentance and faith as required from those who come to baptism. The infant, unable to answer for itself, does so by its sponsors; and the church, in charity, receives that profession as sincerely made, and declares on that supposition that the child is regenerate.” Now this very view the Author long held, till in honesty he was obliged to abandon it, finding that in the case of private baptism,—which, as to the safety of the child, is held to be equally valid with public baptism,—no sponsors are required, no profession of repentance or faith either asked for or given; and yet, upon the simple use of water in the name of the Holy Trinity, the child is declared *regenerate with God’s Holy Spirit*, received as God’s own child by adoption, and incorporated into his holy church. And when this same child is brought publicly into the church, the minister is directed “not to christen the child again, but to receive it as one of the flock of true Christian people;” and “to certify” that the child having been born in original sin, and in the wrath of God, is by the laver of regeneration in baptism received into the number of the children of God,

and heirs of eternal life; so that the child is received into the visible congregation in right of its previous reception into that number. He further observed, that *after* this declaration, and not before it, the sponsors are called upon for a profession of faith, clearly showing this profession to be an acknowledgment on the child's part that it is bound to make a return of true faith and obedience to God his Father, for the covenant blessings *already bestowed*, and this is confirmed by looking back to the address made in the office of public baptism to the sponsors, who are called upon to make these promises for the child, not in order to give the church the opportunity of declaring the child regenerate, but because "our Lord Jesus Christ hath promised in his gospel to grant all those things which ye have prayed for, which promises he on his part will most surely keep and perform;" and therefore (*i. e.* in gratitude for the exceeding richness of his unfailing promises, and not as a condition for obtaining them) this infant must faithfully promise, &c.

"Still in the desire of some to exculpate the church from what they think unscriptural views, the words of the catechism are adduced. That catechism, however, commences this subject by stating, 1st, that the two sacraments are *generally necessary to salvation*, and that in each sacrament are two things, an outward sign and an inward grace; that grace in baptism being a death unto sin, a new birth unto righteousness, and a being made the children of grace. The succeeding question, What is re-

quired of persons to be baptized? does not, as to its mere words, imply that what is required is essential to the nature of the thing done, but only to be that which is required *by the discipline of the church*. But supposing the things required to be *essential* to the nature of this sacrament, what are they? Repentance whereby they forsake sin, and faith—faith whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament. Neither of these, from the nature of the case, can be experienced by infants; and no promise or profession of any kind is required in that service which is ordered for those times of emergency, in which all things not essential are dispensed with. It is evident that the church baptizes infants because she believes infants to have an hereditary and, we may now almost call it, a *natural* right to the ordinance; she believes (Art.) infant baptism to be “most agreeable to the institution of Christ,” through whose precious death “the grace of God has appeared unto all men,” and whose promises are to us and “*to our children*.”

“In short, the church of England has explicitly in its catechism required at the hands of the sponsors, when there are any, a faithful, undoubting belief in the promises of God to the child in this sacrament; and the church of England has also, without any profession of faith or repentance, or any other condition but the simple baptizing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, taken upon herself (with what truth is not here the question) to declare the child

regenerate *with the Holy Spirit*, received by adoption, incorporated into God's church, partaker of the death of His Son, and an heir of everlasting life."

It will not be unacceptable to the reader that we should in the next place introduce the following extract and summary from the works of Bishop Hopkins.

Baptism appointed by Christ for our sanctification. "The subject, which I now intend to prosecute, is concerning baptism; and that this ordinance is *appointed by Christ for our sanctification.*

"And here observe, that, to be sanctified, imports, in the proper signification of it, no other than to be appointed, separated, or dedicated to God. And, therefore, in Scripture, whatsoever is set apart for the use and service of God, whether persons, or places, or things, is said to be holy, or to be sanctified to the Lord. So, the first-born are said to be sanctified to the Lord, Exod. xiii. 2; and Aaron and his sons, to be consecrated and sanctified to minister unto the Lord, Exod. xxviii. 41. And so, for places, Moses was commanded to sanctify the mountain Sinai, that is, to make it holy, by setting it apart only for God's appearance on it, and that the people might not come near to touch it, Exod. xix. 23: thus, the tabernacle, and afterwards the temple, are said to be sanctified, Numb. vii. 1; for, being set apart only for the worship and service of God, they were thereby made relatively holy: so we read that the ground on which Moses stood, is, by God himself, called *holy*, Exod. iii. 5; and Mount Tabor, on

which our Saviour was gloriously transfigured, is, by the apostle, called *the holy mount*, 2 Peter i. 18, because of the special appearance of God in those places, which did then hallow and consecrate them. And then, as for things, a man is said to *sanctify his house to be holy unto the Lord*, Levit. xxvii. 14, and to sanctify his field, v. 16, when the rent of the one and the profits of the other were devoted unto God, for the maintenance of his service and servants. And so, in innumerable other places, the word *sanctify* is thus used; and the import of it is no other than to signify the dedication of a person, thing, place, or time unto God.

Two kinds of dedication. “There are two ways of dedication unto God; whereby his title takes place, and what is so devoted becomes His.

“The one external, by men; as in the instances before cited: whereby there was no change at all wrought in the nature of the thing thus dedicated, but only a change in the relation and propriety of it. As in a field devoted to God, there was no other change, but only in relation to the owner; God himself becoming the proprietor, and receiving the increase of it by His immediate servants and ministers. And thus the piety of our ancestors hath sanctified the tenth part of the increase of the land unto God, for the maintenance of His worship.

“The other dedication is internal, and wrought by God himself. And thus He is said to separate or dedicate persons to himself, when, by

the effectual operation of the Holy Ghost upon them, he endows them with those habits, which enable them to do him service.

“Not to heap up many places, we have both of these, Acts xiii. 2. *Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul, for the work, whereunto I have called them.* Here is their external separation: they were to be dedicated, to be sanctified, or made holy persons by the church: *Separate unto me*; that is, set these men apart, and appoint them by a solemn mission for my work and service in the ministry. Here is, likewise, their internal dedication; whereby God had set them apart for Himself, by the gifts and graces of His Spirit wrought in them: *Separate them to the work, whereunto I have called them: i.e.* whereunto I have inwardly both inclined, and fitted, and furnished them.

A twofold sanctification. “As there is this twofold dedication or separation, so there is also a twofold sanctification.

“There is an external, relative, or ecclesiastical sanctification; which is nothing else but the devoting or giving up a thing or person unto God, by those who have a power so to do.

“There is an internal, real, and spiritual sanctification: and, in this sense, a man is said to be sanctified, when the Holy Ghost doth infuse into his soul the habits of divine grace, and maketh him partaker of the divine nature, whereby he is inwardly qualified to glorify God in a holy life.”

“To be admitted, therefore by baptism into the Church of Christ, is to be admitted into the

state of regeneration or the renewing of all things, and it is called therefore the washing of regeneration, Titus 3, 5.”

The bishop then asserts that baptism is the immediate means of our external and relative sanctification or separation to God.

There are but two regiments of men, the one is of the world, of which Satan is the prince, the other of the church, of which Christ is Lord.

The church of Christ is two-fold, visible and invisible.

The visible comprehends all that profess the name of Christ.

The invisible are all true and faithful believers.

The visible church is the net, (Matt. xiii. 47,) which contained every kind of fish, good and bad; and the floor (Luke iii. 17,) wherein is both chaff and wheat.

In the same way the satanical church (the *ecclesia malignantium*) is visible and invisible: the visible consists of heathens, mahomedans, apostates; the invisible of worldly men, false professors.

Hence it follows that all that are nominally of the church are, *in a sense*, taken out of the world, and so are in ecclesiastical, *i.e.* in general Scripture language, called saints.

He shews this by various texts both in the Old Testament and in the New, as (*e.g.*) Deut. xxxii. 9, “The Lord’s portion is His people,” (meaning Jacob); and yet Rom. ix. 6, “all that were of Israel were not Israel.” And again, he says, we find sanctification and holiness ascribed

to those who were never otherwise sanctified than by external separation from the world, as in 1 Cor. i. 2; for there were some in this church that denied the resurrection, and were guilty of the worst crimes, &c. &c. So, too, Deut. xiv. 1, “ye are the children of the Lord your God;” and yet “with many of them God was not well pleased.”

So Rom. ix. 4—They had “the adoption,” they did not enjoy the *effectual* adoption, but they were the children of God, being separated from the world and brought, by the love of God through Christ, under an ecclesiastical economy and dispensation of holy ordinances.

Again he adds, to be members of the church visible is sufficient to style men members of Christ. So our Saviour Himself speaks, John xv. 2. So also, St. Paul, Rom. xi. 17—for these barren and therefore broken branches of the vine and the olive, are members of His body, not by a vital union, but by an ecclesiastical and political incision.

He thus concludes—“I suppose I have now made it sufficiently clear that all taken out of the world into the visible church of Christ may, according to the phrase and expression of Scripture, be called saints, children of God, and members of Christ.

And then further. Doubtless so far baptism is a means of sanctification, as it is the solemn admission of persons into the visible church, as it separates them from the world and from all false religions in it, and brings them out of the visible kingdom of the devil into the visible

kingdom of Christ. For if all that are admitted into the visible church are thereby, as I have proved, dignified with the title of saints and the children of God, then by baptism, which is the solemn way of admitting them into the church, they may, with very good reason, be said to be made saints, the children of God, and members of Christ.

To such saints as these all the ordinances of the church are due till excommunication.

“Such a baptismal regeneration as this is, must needs be acknowledged by all that will not shut their eyes against the clear light of Scripture.”

“Infants then are regenerated as they are incorporated into the church of Christ, for this is called regeneration, (Matt. ~~ch.~~ 19~~th~~ 28.) “Ye which have followed me in *the regeneration*,” (*i. e.* in planting my church which is the renewing of the world. And, therefore, the apostle (2 Cor. 5~~th~~ 17), saying that old things are passed away, all things are become new, is thought to allude to Is. lxxv. 17. “Behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered.” And this state of the gospel was by the Jews frequently called “The world to come,” and so likewise it is called by the apostle, Heb. ii. 5. “Unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come. Whereof we speak.”

So far Bishop Hopkins, to whose valuable treatise the reader is referred. It will be seen that the Bishop’s view is that taken by the writer of this treatise, with this only difference, that

he does not so clearly bring out that truth which is, however, strictly and necessarily implied in his reasoning, *that God through the death of His dear Son has shewn himself to be a reconciled Father*, and that therefore the truths sealed in baptism *are real truths, although men may never realise them*. Their sins are all committed against redeeming and paternal love. "I have nourished and brought up a children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, *my people* doth not consider." Isaiah i. v. 2, 3.

I will next state at length, as an authority, which, with a very large section of the church will justly have considerable weight, the recorded sentiments of the late Mr. Simeon.

Extract from Mr. Simeon's works, defending the use of the term regeneration in the baptismal service. In the baptismal service, we thank God for having regenerated the baptized infant by his Holy Spirit. Now from hence it appears, that in the opinion of our Reformers, regeneration and remission of sins did accompany baptism. But in what sense did they hold this sentiment? Did they maintain that there was no need for the seed* then sown in the heart of the baptized person to grow up and bring forth fruit; or that

* This expression has its origin and authority in St. John, 1st Ep. iii. 9. "Whatsoever is born of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God."

Now the birth of or from God, or the regeneration visibly signed and sealed in baptism, is in all probability in

he could be saved in any other way than by a progressive renovation of his soul after the

the first place, that which St. John alludes to. But then, how does he refer to it? most evidently in order to show that its reality and virtue admits of a test, and that unless it stands that test it is for all saving purposes of little or no value. It is the object of the Apostle to show, that where there is true faith, then also there are and there must be the *fruits* of true faith—that where there is a heavenly birth, then of necessity there must be a heavenly life. He addresses then those to whom he is writing as the sons of God, (v. 2.) but then (v. 3), he says that the faithful sons of a pure father must be pure too, and again (v. 5), that the very object of the manifestation of Christ was to take away sin, and that therefore it is impossible that they who continue in sin can be “abiding in Christ,” (in other words) can be in heart (though they may be in privilege) children of God, for (v. 8), “he that committeth sin is of the devil.” Works, then, are declaratory of parentage, (as Christ told the Jews, ye are of your father the devil, John viii. 44), for if a man is really God’s child, that is, if his heart is changed, if he is converted, then the seed of change and conversion and a new nature “remaineth in him,” just as the seed of the old Adam in all *his* descendants, and he the converted child of God does *his* father’s work, just as the unconverted does *his* father’s.

Although it be from this text, therefore, that as far as it is scriptural the term baptismal seed seems to be derived, the text itself when examined, would rather seem to prove the reverse of that, for which it is used. And, therefore, instead of its being deducible from this passage, that baptismal regeneration implies *necessarily* the sowing at that very time of the seed of a new nature, it seems to prove, if the proof of any doctrine can be rested on a single passage, that no one, though baptismally regenerate, has the true seed of a changed nature who does not bear the true fruit. “In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.” John iii. 10. It may, therefore be concluded, and I would

Divine image? Had they asserted any such doctrine as that it would have been impossible for any enlightened person to concur with them. But nothing can be conceived more repugnant to their sentiments than such an idea as this; so far from harbouring such a thought, they have, and that too in this very prayer, taught us to look to God for that total change both of heart and life which *long since their days has begun to be expressed* by the term regeneration. After thanking God for regenerating the infant by His Holy Spirit, we are taught to pray ‘that he, being dead unto sin and living unto righteousness,’ may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin, and then declaring a total change to be the necessary means of his obtaining salvation, we add, “so that finally with the residue of Thy holy church he *may* be an inheritor of Thine everlasting kingdom.” Is there (I would ask) any person that can require more than this? or does God in his Word require more?

There are two things to be noticed in reference to this subject—the *term* regeneration and the *thing*. The term occurs but twice in the Scriptures; in one place it refers to baptism, and is distinguished from the renewing of the Holy Ghost, *which, however, is represented as attendant on it*; and in the other place it has a totally distinct meaning unconnected with the

say this with great submission, whether, notwithstanding the weight and authority of the names of those who use the expression, there is not in the phrase baptismal seed, an idea conveyed which is calculated to mislead the mind.

subject. Now the *term* they use as the Scripture uses it, and the thing they require as strongly as any person can require it. They do not give us any reason to imagine that an adult person can be saved without experiencing all that *modern* divines have included in the term regeneration; on the contrary they do both there and in the Liturgy insist upon a radical change of both heart and life. Here, then, the only question is *not* ‘whether a baptized person can be saved by that ordinance without sanctification,’ but whether God does always accompany the sign with the thing signified? Here is certainly room for difference of opinion; but it cannot be positively decided in the negative; because we cannot know or even judge respecting it in any case whatever except by the fruits that follow; and, therefore, in all fairness it may be considered only as a doubtful point; and if we appeal, as we ought to do, to the Holy Scriptures, they certainly do, in a very remarkable way, accord with the expressions in our Liturgy. St. Paul says, by one Spirit we are ALL baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been ALL made to *drink into* one Spirit.’ And this he says of all the visible members of Christ’s body, (1 Cor. xii. 13—27.) Again, speaking of the whole nation of Israel, infants as well as adults, he says, “They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did ALL eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and *that*

Rock was Christ,” (1 Cor. x. 1—4.) Yet, behold, in the very next verse, he tells us that with many of them God was displeased, and overthrew them in the wilderness.” In another place he speaks yet more strongly still—“As many of you,” says he, “as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Here we see what is meant by the expression “baptized into Christ: it is precisely the same expression as that before mentioned, of the Israelites being “baptized unto Moses:” (the preposition *εἰς* is used in both places; it includes all that had been initiated into his religion by the rite of baptism; and of them UNIVERSALLY does the apostle say they have put on Christ.’ Now I ask, have not the persons, who scruple the use of that prayer in the baptismal service, equal reason to scruple the use of these different expressions?

Again, St. Paul says—“Repent and be baptized every one of you *for the remission of sins,*” (Acts ii. 38, 39). And in another place, “Baptism doth now save us,” (1 Pet. iii. 21). And speaking elsewhere of baptized persons who were unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, he says—“*He hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins,*” (2 Pet. i. 9). Does not this very strongly countenance the idea which our Reformers entertained—that the remission of our sins, and the regeneration of our souls, is attendant on the baptismal rite? Perhaps it will be said that the inspired writers spake of persons who had been baptized at an adult age. But if they did so in some places, they certainly did not in others; and where they

did not they must be understood as comprehending all, whether infants or adults; and therefore the language of our Liturgy, which is not a whit stronger than theirs, may be both subscribed and used without any just occasion of offence.

“ Let me, then, speak the truth before God: though I am no Arminian, I do think the refinements of Calvin have done great harm in the Church; they have driven multitudes from the plain and popular way of speaking used by the inspired writers, and have made them unreasonably and unscripturally squeamish in their modes of expression; and I conceive that the less addicted any person is to systematic accuracy, the more he will accord with the inspired writers, and the more he will approve the views of our reformers. I do not mean, however, to say that a slight alteration in two or three instances would not be an improvement, since it would take off a *burthen* from many minds, and supersede the necessity of laboured explanations: but I do mean to say that there is no such objection to these expressions as to deter any conscientious person from giving his unfeigned assent and consent to the Liturgy altogether, or from using the particular expressions which we have been endeavouring to explain.”—
SIMEON’S Works, vol. ii. p. 259.

Baptismal regeneration held by Mr. Simeon. It will be evident from this extract, what Mr. Simeon’s views were in respect to the use of this term regeneration, as applied to baptism. It is clear that he held baptismal regeneration to be the doctrine of the reformed Church of Eng-

land. But if this be granted it still becomes a matter of nice, but most important enquiry, what exactly the sense is, that is to be attached to the term. I think we shall see this more clearly by tracing it up to what is evidently its spring or fountain among the Jews.

Meaning of the term regeneration. Now it is well observed by Wall, in his Introduction, (Hist. of Infant Baptism), that the meaning and full import of a rule given in any old book for the doing of any thing, is not so well apprehended by us, unless we understand the history of that nation and that time in which the said rule was given. For it is common for a rule or law to be so worded as that one may perceive the law-giver has supposed or taken it for granted that the people to whom it was given did already know and understand some things which were, previous to the apprehending his meaning, so that it were needless to express them. Our Saviour's law, he then adds for baptizing all nations, is set down in very short and general words—and many people have doubted whether infants ought to be baptized. To ascertain this historically, they should discover, 1st, the practice of the Jews in baptizing, and 2ndly, that of the primitive Christians.

The Jews baptized proselytes. Now, 1st.—The custom of the Jews before our Saviour's time, was to baptize as well as to circumcise any proselyte from the Gentiles. And so in all ages, (says Maimonides), "when an *Ethnic* or Gentile is willing to enter into covenant and *gather himself under the wings of the Majesty of God*" and

take upon him the yoke of the law, he must be circumcised and baptized, and bring a sacrifice as it is written, (Num. xv, 15), "As you are so shall the stranger be." How are you? By circumcision, baptism, and bringing a sacrifice. So likewise the stranger, by circumcision, baptism, and bringing a sacrifice." To explain this,

The Jews considered themselves to have been baptized as a nation.

it is to be observed that the Jews conceived themselves as a nation to have been baptized once for all, as described Exod. xix. 10, just before the giving of the law; and having thus been baptized as a nation themselves, they

held it right that every heathen proselyte should also be baptized. But then considering that this baptism was of an hereditary nature in its efficacy, they did not think it necessary for the children of Gentile proselytes, born after their parents' baptism, to be baptized any more than

Opinions of Selden and Hammond on 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

their own. Selden observes that, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, would not have been clear to the Jews, had it not been that they looked on themselves to have all entered into covenant by baptism: and Hammond is of the same opinion.

Baptism of infant proselytes.

Both the Misna and the Gemara, Selden observes, agree that a child of never so little age might be made a proselyte: and the Gemara answers the objection which might be made by reason of their non-age, saying:—"They are wont to baptize such a proselyte in infancy, upon the profession of the house of judgment, (*i. e.* the court), for this is *for his good.*" The gloss upon the Ge-

marā adds, “the three men have the care of the infant’s baptism according to the law of the baptism of proselytes, which requires three men who do so become to him a father.” So that *Profession* as Selden observes, a proselyte, if of *by proxy*. age, made profession to the court that he would keep Moses’ law, but in the case of minors, the court itself did profess the same thing in their name: just as in the Christian church the Godfathers and Godmothers do.

The reason we thus see given by the Gemara for the baptism of infant proselytes is this:—A proselyte that is an infant, they are wont to baptize upon the knowledge or profession of the house of judgment (or court), because it is for his good. *This profession made by the house of Origin of judgment (or court), for the infant is sponsors. considered by Selden and all learned theological antiquarians to have been the origin of sponsors.*

Reason additional of adoption of sponsors by Christian Church. It may be observed that, in addition to this view which is given by Selden and others, of the origin of sponsors, is that also which is commonly assigned, viz., the necessity of the case. By the necessity of the case, I mean, that which arose from the constant orphanage produced by persecution. For it was most important that there should be some persons pledged to educate young children who had been baptized, in the event of the death of their parents. The great honour paid to the sacrament of baptism, made the early church feel this very strongly. They felt it a *deep dishonour done to*

God, that the heathen should bring up those who had been consecrated to Him. They felt that the child had been put by baptism under the superintending agency of the Holy Spirit and that it would be most dreadful to resign it again to the teaching of idolaters and the doctrines of devils. They, therefore, adopted the Jewish custom of profession by the house of judgment, which in common language is profession by sponsors.

A reason of a similar character existed in the Jewish church. It may be added that these cases of necessity were very similar in both churches, and that the want which led the early Christian church to adopt the Jewish custom was very like that which led the Jewish church at first to originate it. For very many of the Jewish proselytes were Gentile infants that had been exposed, and who were discovered and taken up by the Jews, or else those that were taken in war; and it was necessary for such little ones, whose parents were in all cases Gentiles, and either dead or unknown, that there should be some among God's people who would answer in their names as it respected the fulfilling of their part in the covenant, and undertake that they should be brought up in the true faith.

It was a very common thing with the heathen to expose their infants, so that Dr. Lightfoot says that the *baptizing of infants* was a thing as well known in the Jewish church as it has ever been in the Christian church.—See Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebr.* on Matt. iii. 6.

No doubt about the baptism of infants. We conclude then, without any doubt or hesitation, that it was always the custom among the Jews to baptize the infants of proselytes, on their first admission, if they had them; or we may put it thus--*All persons whom they baptized at all, they baptized in infancy if they had the power to do so.*

Our blessed Lord, therefore, took baptism as he found it, only that He exalted it to a higher purpose. He abolished (tacitly) circumcision probably because it seemed particularly connected with the Hebrew stock of privileges, and put baptism into its place; and it is on this account that it is called (Col. ii. 11.) "the circumcision made without hands," and more distinctly "the circumcision of Christ."

The baptism of John. But in carrying on the custom of infant baptism as shewn by history, from the Jewish to the Christian church, it may be said that there is a break in the baptism of John which intervened between that of the Jewish and Christian baptism. For John's was the baptism of repentance, and it is objected that confession of sins was made when baptism was administered by him:—"they were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins," (Matt. iii. 6.);—and that therefore infants could not have been baptized by John.

The patriarchal habits of the Jews, and the feeling of headship. In regard to this it is to be observed, as above, that it was the custom to suffer infants to be proselytes, and to become so by baptism, because it was for their good. If, therefore, infants were so far privileged in a case

in which they could not exercise their own discretion, and *that* because it was for their good, it is most reasonable to suppose that in this case where their good was also to be atchieved, the same privilege would be extended. The feeling of headship was very strong, both nationally among the Jews and universally among all nations. To this strong feeling, derived no doubt, as far as the Jews were concerned, from their own Scriptures, must be attributed the ready following of the head of the family in the cases of the household of Lydia, Stephanas, and the Philippian jailor. And when we consider the universal and uninterrupted national practice in this respect, the actual entering into covenant by children, both *generally*, as at Horeb and Sinai, and *particularly* as in every individual case of circumcision; and when we couple it with the common practice of baptizing infant proselytes, we cannot doubt but that parents, when they were baptized confessing their own *Little children most probably baptized by John.* sins in Jordan, would take their little ones that they might be baptized also. Dr. Lightfoot well observes (Hor. Heb. on Matt. iii.) "I dont believe that the people that flocked to John's baptism were so forgetful of the custom of their nation as not to bring little children with them to be baptized. The recollection of the strong feeling they entertained in regard to the hereditary consequences of sin ("Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind," John ix. 2.) would add still further confirmation, if such were needed, to this conclusion."

Lightfoot's opinion.

Confession not invariable. It is evident, moreover, from the baptism of our blessed Saviour, that confession of sin was not made in actual words by *every one* that was baptized; for Jesus was submitting *silently* to the ordinance when John interrupted him. We may, therefore, conclude that as John preached repentance and baptized, the very fact of being baptized was considered as tantamount to a confession that the individual was a sinner, for this John Baptist himself evidently thought, and it made the difficulty with him in baptizing the Lord.

One objection has been made to that which we have shewn to have been the universal custom of the Jews, *viz.* that of baptizing; and it is grounded on this question—"Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?" The answer is that John was not baptizing proselytes, but Jews; and it was the baptizing of *Jews*, who believed themselves all to have an hereditary baptism. See p. 120; not the fact of his baptizing at all that perplexed them.

Baptism of proselytes called a new birth. But it is not so much the practice of infant baptism as the language in which it was spoken of that we are considering. In regard to this then, there is no doubt but that the baptism of a proselyte was called his new birth, regeneration, or being born again. So strong was the feeling in which these expressions originated, that some of the Jewish doctors thought that a proselyte after baptism ceased altogether to be con-

nected with his natural relatives. "The Gentile that is made a proselyte, and the slave that is made free, is like a child new-born," (Maimon Hor. Hebr.) So Tacitus writes that the first thing the Jews taught their proselytes was to renounce their country, kindred, &c. It is to this feeling that St. Paul most probably alludes, (2 Cor. v. 16, 17.) "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh."

New state. "The rabbis," says Wall, "do much enlarge upon this privilege of a proselyte being put into a *new state*, and putting off all his former relations: those that were a-kin to him before are now so no longer; but he is just as if

New mother. he were *born of a new mother*. Hence, *ther.*

perhaps, the ready use in the Scripture of the phrase "new creature," "new born babe," (1 Pet. ii. 2.) modes of expression, which were quite familiar to St. Peter and St. Paul, and the other apostles, as they were Jews,* and

* It should not, indeed be supposed, that these expressions were, so to speak, found accidentally to prevail among the Jews, and that being so found, they were transferred as convenient and intelligible by inspired men, (or rather by the Holy Spirit which inspired them), into the Christian economy. Undoubtedly they were *expressions of the mind of God* in both dispensations: they characterized the view in which He that is all seeing beheld the matter of baptism in either case: but the first was a type of the second. The baptism of the proselyte was the putting of the individual into the family of God's earthly people, that of the convert to Christianity or of his little one, is the putting them or his child into the great family of God in Christ. Moreover, however correctly these phrases express a new state, they cannot be for a moment said to be realised in the extent of their meaning till that which is externally signified is truly, deeply and internally felt.

coming from them with peculiar force when applied to a state of Christian privilege and grace."

John iii. 1—10.—
The conversation of Christ with Nicodemus chiefly referred to a new birth in baptism.

We cannot, perhaps, introduce in any place better than in this a few words on the subject of our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, (John iii. 1—10.) as its interpretation depends upon the language ordinarily used among the Jews in reference to baptism.

Now it is evident that Nicodemus came to enquire about the kingdom of the Messiah. This is plain from our Lord's first words—"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" (in other words) "You come to enquire of me about the kingdom of God; you think it is to be a great and glorious earthly kingdom, and that all the Jewish nation is to be the partaker, and perhaps the land of Judea to be the scene of its glory: but I tell you that at present it is a spiritual kingdom; it is not the state and polity, or the land, that is now to be changed, but the heart of the inhabitants. It is a kingdom which no man can even see, so as to be aware that it is come, except he be born from above." Now this staggered Nicodemus. He knew that all proselytes were baptized, and so were said to be born again: but he had never heard of this baptismal change as necessary *for Jews*. He believed, as all his nation believed, that they were already, as in fact they were, in a clean or holy *state*, and therefore he could not understand why there should be any neces-

sity for that state being further changed: they were already God's people by privilege, and he could not understand what alteration in this respect was necessary. Still, therefore, having in view some great earthly change, and thinking it perhaps possible that in the Messiah's kingdom which he, with his nation, looked for, as one of great external glory, the Jews might experience, all of them, some great bodily change; he asks—"Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Our blessed Lord replies immediately in a way which might dispel his earthly notions; as if He had said—The birth I mean is that birth which is signified by baptism. You are a master in Israel, and you understand the customs of your nation and the language of your ceremonies. You baptize proselytes, and call them "new born," because they are taken out of an unclean state and put into a clean state; taken out of a state of nature and put into a state of grace. Now this same change must pass over you with a real and a vital efficacy before you can see the kingdom of God. You must be "born from above" in order to see and acknowledge this kingdom, and you must submit to the ordinance of Christian baptism, and so have my seal upon you before you can enter into it. This change is a real change, and unless you experience this real change so as to be able to see my glory in my degradation, as a sun through mist and clouds, and so as entirely to give up all Jewish antipathies, (notwithstanding you are a Jew,) as a converted heathen gives up all heathen prejudices, you never can

become a Christian proselyte, and see the kingdom of God.

There can be little doubt but this is the true meaning of the language of this passage; and there are three things which seem pretty clear from a general consideration of it.

Three collaries drawn from the explanation above. First.—That the term “born again” was familiar to Nicodemus as a master in Israel, and that it was used by our Lord, as the Jews used it, in reference to baptism. Secondly.—That our Lord, in speaking of the change necessary for Nicodemus, signified it under the terms “water” and “the Spirit,” so coupling, in some degree and sense at least, the baptism of water and that of the Holy Spirit. Thirdly.—That there seems no good ground for saying that wherever a baptism by water takes place there is also a change of heart and of nature; because, in case of converted adults, the kingdom of God is “seen” before baptism. Add to this, that which it is not perhaps hypercritical to observe, that the wording is nicely and cautiously guarded, being in the first place “see,” and in the second, “enter into;” and seems to indicate that it is by the supernal birth that men see the blessed truths of the gospel, or the kingdom of God; and that it is by baptism, which is the recognized seal and entrance door, that the Holy Spirit stamps and admits them as its members.*

Practice of the early We come then in the next place to the language and the practice of the

* In the first case the expression is, “born again or from above;” in the second, born of water and of the Holy Spirit.

church proved from the writings of the fathers.

The fathers are good witnesses though not expositors.

early Christian church, in regard to baptism. In making extracts from early Christian writers, it is most important to remember that they are not to be cited as authoritative expounders of truth, but as the best witnesses we can have to the practice and doctrines of the primitive apostolic church. The interval of time by which many of them were separated from the apostles, was very small, and some had actually conversed with them. They *must*, therefore, be good witnesses of apostolic doctrine. In addition to this they wrote, some of them, in the same language as the Scripture was written in. Their authority is, therefore, particularly good in respect to Scripture terms, because the Greek language, which is a dead language to us, was a living language to them. They were familiar with all its terms and phrases. They had, therefore, not merely the advantage of personal intercourse with apostles and apostolic men, but the additional advantage of speaking the language in which they spoke and wrote. If we were to talk with St. Paul now, we should, in all probability, or rather we may say that we should certainly, misunderstand him from not using the Greek as our vernacular language. It was not so with them; expressions which puzzle us were quite easy and familiar to them. Now, in looking at their writings, we find that they speak of infant baptism as a common thing, and that they constantly use the term regeneration as synonymous with baptism, or in other words,

instead of saying a person is baptized they say he is regenerated.*

Justin Martyr. We have seen that St. Paul (Col. ii. 11, 12.) speaks of baptism as Christian circumcision. Justin Martyr does the same. He calls baptism spiritual circumcision in his dialogue with Trypho. Now, as circumcision was for infants, we should be led from this language to suppose that baptism was also for infants.

Again, the same writer speaks thus—"Several (among us) of sixty and seventy years old, who were made disciples to Christ from our childhood (*οἱ ἐκ τῶν παιδῶν μαθητεύθημεν*) do continue uncorrupted or virgins. Now the word for "make disciples," is the same as that in Matt. xxviii. 19. "Go ye and teach (make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." But by that passage we find that the way to make disciples was to baptize. Hence these aged persons, who are described as having been made disciples in childhood or infancy, must have been baptized at that time. But Justin wrote ninety years after St. Matthew; therefore these infant disciples must have been baptized about thirty-six years after our Lord's ascension, or *during the life of St. John*. In other words we *have a clear proof that infant baptism was practised in the apostles time*.

* They were also called *φωτισμένοι* (Heb. vi. v. 4.) See p. 137, quotation from Justin Martyr.

Irenæus. Irenæus flourished about sixty seven years after the apostles. There is a very beautiful passage in his writings to the following effect:—"He came to save all persons by himself; all, I mean, who by him are *regenerated* (baptized) unto God; infants, and children, and youths, and elder persons. Therefore he went through the several ages, for infants being made an infant, and so sanctifying infants," &c. If regeneration mean baptism in this passage, as there is not the least doubt but it does, the testimony here given to the custom of infant baptism is singularly clear and beautiful.

That Irenæus by this word *regenerated*, means baptized is clear from this. In writing about Matt. xxviii. 19, he says. Again, when he gave his disciples the commission of *regenerating* unto God, he says: Go ye and teach all nations, *baptizing* them, &c. The argument, therefore, from Irenæus, would be this:—Irenæus was born four years before St. John died, and he wrote about sixty years after. He talks of the regeneration of infants. We look into his works as well as into those of Justin Martyr, and we find that regeneration is used for baptism. Therefore, by the regeneration of infants. he means their baptism. But Irenæus was Bishop of Lyons, and he must, therefore, have known the practice of the church, because he administered it, and his testimony is not his own opinion, but the general practice of the church. Therefore it was the general practice of the church in his days to baptize infants.

But his days were primitive ; therefore from his testimony we prove infant baptism to be *primitive*, as from Justin Martyr we have proved it to be *apostolic*.

Infant baptism was primitive. It is to be observed too, that Irænaeus was brought up in Asia, that he relates how often he had heard Polycarp discourse of St. John and his teaching. (Polycarp was in all probability the angel or bishop of the church in Smyrna, Rev. ii.) It would be absurd to suppose that, with these great advantages, he could be ignorant of what was done in this matter, so short a time before. And it were equally so to imagine that the Christians of Asia, among whom St. John had preached, should be ignorant or mistaken. And hence we gather that infant baptism was general in this primitive age.

Origen. Origen flourished about one hundred and ten years after the apostles. It is well worth our while to consider three short extracts from his writings.

1.—“ Besides all this what is the reason that whereas the baptism of the church is for forgiveness of sins, infants also are by the usage of the church baptized, when, if there were nothing in infants that wanted forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism would be needless to them.”

2.—“ It is for this reason that infants are baptized, because by the sacrament of baptism the pollution of our birth is taken away.”

3.—“ For this the church received from the apostles the tradition to baptize infants. For

they (the apostles) to whom the divine mysteries were committed, knew that there is in all persons the natural pollution of sin, which must be done away by water and the Spirit. ”

Now Origen’s family had long been Christians. His father suffered martyrdom about one hundred years after St. John. His grand-father, or at least his great-grand-father, must have lived in the apostles’ time. Even from his own family records, therefore, he must have known whether infant baptism was right and customary. But he says that it was so. Therefore from his testimony again we are certain that infant baptism existed from the beginning of the church. He was also a very learned man, and had travelled in many Christian churches. Therefore he must have known the general custom of the Christians in all parts.

St. Cyprian and the African bishops Cyprian lived one hundred and fifty-three years after the apostles, and was bishop of Carthage.

The bishops often met there, as in other great cities, to consider difficulties. One question which they considered was this—whether an infant might be baptized, if need required, before it was eight days old. Sixty-six bishops were present.

Now it is evident that they considered baptism to be Christian circumcision, that is, they looked on them both as we have shewn above (Part 1.) to be “seals of the same covenant of faith.” Richard Baxter well observes, that in a doctrinal point, and in a single matter of fact, a mistake may be made, and *that* by hundreds,

but in a matter of fact so general and so notorious as infant baptism, and of which so many were partakers, how (he asks) could these (sixty-six bishops) be ignorant?

It is evident, therefore, that at this time also infant baptism was universal.

St. Austin. His answer to the Pelagians,

It is unnecessary to make further quotations out of later authors. At the third and fourth centuries after the apostles we come to St. Austin, who being engaged in the Pelagian controversy, in which the root of the dispute was the existence of original sin, quite overwhelmed his opponents by his repeated and powerful appeals to infant baptism, as proving the questioned truth. The argument had before, many times, been used. It is seen in the quotation given above, from Origen; and it is this—"You deny the existence of original sin, but you baptize infants, and you know that infant baptism has been the practice of the universal church. But

Incon- trovertible proof of original sin from the general practice of infant baptism.

why are infants baptized? Is it not for the washing away of the guilt of original sin? But if original sin did not exist in infants there would be no necessity for their baptism, for baptism is for the remission of sin, but actual sin they cannot possibly have committed. Therefore the sin remitted

in their case must be original sin; and therefore infant baptism proves that infants are all in original sin."

In his answer to the Pelagians about the origin of the soul, he thus writes—"This I say,

that original sin is so plain by the Scriptures, and that it is forgiven to infants in the laver of regeneration is so confirmed by the authority and antiquity of the catholic faith, and so notorious by the practice of the church, that whatsoever is enquired or affirmed of the origin of the soul, if it be contrary to this, cannot be true.—August. Answ. to 18 Pelag. Bps.

St. Augustin. St. Augustin says too, “If only the body were corrupt, baptism after death would do, but we see parents run with their little ones to receive the grace of baptism.”

So, in his letter to Hierom. “You are none of those who now begin to prate of new things, and say that there is no guilt derived from Adam which is by baptism forgiven in an infant.”

All proving infant baptism. From these extracts, it is rendered as clear as any historical fact can be, that infant baptism prevailed from the very earliest period of the church down to the fifth century. After that time the documents are so numerous, and the practice so general, that it is unnecessary to give further testimony of this kind.

We know how it was continued to the time of the Reformation, almost uninterrupted by any doubt of its propriety, and how from that period it has come down to us: so that in fact, we have a clear stream of historical testimony

Therefore stream of testimony for infant baptism from apos- for infant baptism from the apostolical age to the present time, and we have, in addition to this, the argument for infant baptism derived from this custom, as it existed even before the

Christian era, in the baptism of infant proselytes in the Jewish church.

But the special object of this chapter is to shew the use, and as far as it can be ascertained, the meaning, of the term baptismal regeneration.

Wall, asserts, that among the early Christian writers, regeneration was constantly used

as synonymous with baptism, or, that to say a person was regenerated, simply meant that he was baptized. His assertion is fully borne out by the passages he cites. For example Justin

Justin Martyr, in his apology, describing the ceremony of introducing converts into

the Christian church, thus writes :—“We bring them to some plain, where there is water, and they are regenerated by the same way of regeneration by which we were regenerated,”

Και τροπον αναγεννησεως ον και ημεις αυτοι αναγεννηθημεν αναγεννωσινται.

“For they are washed with water in the name of God the Father and Lord of all things,

and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.”

For Christ says, “unless you be regenerated, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of

Heaven,” and every body knows it is impossible for those who are once and for all generated (or

born) to enter again into their mother’s womb.”

In the introduction of this passage Justin says—“I will now declare unto you in what way we, who have been renewed by Christ

καινοποιηθεντες δια τῆς Χριστοῦ), have dedicated ourselves to God;” and in the end; “this washing is called the enlightening,”

“enlightening.” (φωτισμος)

Justin Martyr flourished forty years only after the apostolic age.

1.—In his time, therefore, to regenerate meant to baptize.

2.—He understood our Lord to mean baptism when he spoke of regeneration to Nicodemus.*

3.—In his time the term “enlightening” was also applied to baptism.

Renewal 4.—“Renewal” is used to describe
never so that change of heart and of nature
used. which, in adult converts, takes place
previous to baptism.

5.—As a consequence it follows that while it is right, if we follow the example of the church in the early age, to use the word regeneration as identical with baptism, it is wrong to use it as implying that change of heart and nature which is signified by the expression *renewal*, which precedes it in adults, and is subsequent to it in infants.

Again, from the expression used in the extract from Justin Martyr given in page 131, we find that he speaks in one place of baptism as spiritual circumcision, thus connecting the two covenants as one, by their sign and seal; and that in another he speaks of old persons as having been made disciples in infancy, in such a way as leads us certainly to conclude that a baptized person was considered a *disciple*.

Irenæus. Next to him comes Irenæus, who also uses regeneration as signifying baptism.

* Wall adds—“And so did all the writers of these 400 years, not one excepted.”

Origin uses it in the same way: so do Tertulian, Cyprian, Gregory of Nazianzen, and indeed so do all the fathers down to Augustin, and through him down as far as they write of it to the reformation; and so it was used also at that time by the reformers, and after that time by their successors.

But if they used this term *regeneration*, what did they mean by it? In answer to this question I would refer the reader to the extract given from Justin Martyr, page 137, in which extract it is most clear that he considered baptismal regeneration as a different thing from renewal of heart or change of *Hermas*. nature. But there is an authority even before this. In an extract from the Shepherd *Hermas*, descriptive of a vision in which the members of the old church are represented as unhewn stones in the spiritual building, he adds, *only this seal was wanting to them, &c.*; on which Wall observes—When he says that the seal of the Son of God is necessary to their entering into the kingdom of God, and that that seal (as he also says afterwards) is water, it is plainly an expression of that truth, John iii. 5.

Baptism considered as a seal by the Shepherd Hermas. It is evident from this that *Hermas*, who wrote even before St. John composed his Gospel, looked on baptism as a *seal*; and we may add, as it is said of Abraham, in regard to circumcision, “a seal of the faith which they (the saints of the elder dispensation) had, being unbaptized.”

In making an extract from an author like this, we only consider him, as we do all the

others, as expressing the opinion and view *generally entertained.*

St. Jerom speaks of Christ as regenerate. Again, St. Jerom says of Jesus Christ: "born of a virgin, regenerated by a virgin," meaning that he was regenerated by John the Baptist in his baptism. But it is evident that as our blessed Lord had no evil nature to be changed, Jerom, could not possibly mean that he was regenerated in his baptism, in the highest and vital sense of the term. This, therefore, is an instance of the use of the term regeneration, in a sense much below that which many divines are in the habit of affixing to it.

Again, in commenting on Irenæus, Wall thus writes: "Irenæus does here speak of infants regenerated. 'Tis plain enough that they are not capable of regeneration in any other sense of the word than as it signifies baptism, I mean the outward act of baptism, accompanied with that grace or *mercy of God*, whereby he conducts them into the covenant without any *Baptismal* sense of theirs." Here, therefore, Wall *grace is covenant mercy.* interprets regeneration in baptism as used by Irenæus to signify the placing them in that new covenant state and relation to God, of which baptism is the seal and entrance door. It is evident, moreover, that he understands baptismal grace to be God's covenant mercy.

Origen, forgiveness of sins. Origen, thus writes: "What is the reason that whereas the baptism of the church is for forgiveness of sins, infants also are by the usage of the church bap-

tized, when, if there were nothing in infants that wanted forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism would be needless to them? (8 Hom. in Levit. c. 12.)

From this it is evident that the *grace* of baptism is by Origen, here considered to be forgiveness of sin, (in infants of original sin), not, as is contended by many, necessarily a change of nature. And this is strictly scriptural, for baptism is "*for the remission of sin,*" and it is quite accordant with the interpretation by Wall, of the language of Irenæus, for remission of sin is the first and chief blessing of the new covenant: "Blessed is he whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered." (Ps. 22. Ep. Rom. c. iv. v. 6, 7.)*

From an examination of the stream † of authorities in the early ages, it is evident that the remission of sin, or the washing away of the pollution of birth or original sin, is considered by them to be the great blessing or grace of baptism. And nothing makes this more evident than the constant reference to baptism, as the strongest proof which the orthodox could urge against the Pelagians to prove the existence in infants of the corruption of original sin.

*Tertul-
lian and
Origen
used even
stronger
language.* But it is not to be denied that many, and indeed we may say the greater part of the fathers, went further than this in their language if not in their opinions. But they are the fathers

* So in the creed, "I believe in one baptism for the remission of sins."

† Vid. infra. opinion of Wall, &c.

immediately succeeding the very first, and *not* the very first themselves. Tertullian and Origen both used expressions calculated to convey the idea that they believed some wonderful change to take place in the nature and heart of the child at its baptism. But we know that Tertullian fell into the error of the Montanists, and was not generally considered at all an unexceptionable witness for catholic truth; and he is certainly not so where the imagination is concerned. Moreover what he writes concerning the effects of baptism, he writes as his own *private* opinion (not indeed expressly but constructively so) and not as the general and catholic creed.* Origen too is to be read with equal

* Even Origen calls baptism a sealing, and as it were a garment to our faith.

St. Austin St. Austin is asked by Boniface, how *sponsors* can make profession of faith for infants. He answers that baptism is the sacrament of faith, not the implantation of the grace of faith, and so too it is the sacrament of conversion or turning to God, not conversion or turning, itself. And he is constituted a fidel (*fidelis*), not by that faith which consists in the will of believers, but from his receiving the sacrament of that faith. And when a person, he adds, begins to have a sense of things, he does not repeat that sacrament, (i. e. he is not rebaptized as many well meaning but not well instructed persons are in this day), but *understands the force of it*, and by consent of will, squares himself to the true meaning of it, and till he can do this, the sacrament will avail to his preservation, against all contrary powers, &c.

Now it is quite evident from this, that St. Augustin, thought the blessing of baptismal regeneration to be strictly sacramental and that as no will had begun to rebel, so there could be no conversion of will, any more than there could be faith, there being as yet no development of reason.

caution, as having been greatly addicted to speculation, and having gone into decided errors.†

Wall's summary of the opinions of St. Austin and the ancients. The conclusion which Wall comes to, after citing a long passage from St. Augustin on the subject of baptismal regeneration, seems extremely satisfactory. "Most of the pædobaptists," he writes, "go no further than St. Austin; they hold that God by His Spirit does at the time of baptism seal and apply to the infant that is there dedicated to Him, the promises of the covenant of which he is capable, viz. adoption, pardon of sin, translation from the state of nature to that of grace, &c. On which account the infant is said to be *regenerated of* (or by) *the Spirit*. Not that God does by any miracle at that time illuminate or convert the mind of the child. And

In the last clause of the quotation, he alludes to the mysterious guardianship of the baptized infant by the Holy Ghost, against the malignity of those foul spirits whose influence was much insisted on and greatly dreaded as is evident in the primitive theology. It is not consistent with the plan we have prescribed to ourselves to make any comment upon this.

† It may be remarked, in regard to both the sacraments that owing to the figurative and highly rhetorical character of the style of many early writers, expressions were used which seem to have been much beyond the plain and received opinions of the general church. This was particularly so in respect to the Lord's Supper, so that there are many passages in writers long before the twelfth century, at which period transubstantiation took its place among the received doctrines of the Romish church, in which expressions are found which go very near to this heresy. These are clearly overthrown by the numerous quotations from the same fathers, in which transubstantiation is distinctly denied.—See Jewel Apol.

for original sin, or the corruption of nature, they hold that God, by His covenant, does abolish the guilt of it, receives the child to His mercy in Christ, and consigns to him by promise such grace as shall afterward, by the use of means if he live, be sufficient to keep it under, but not wholly to extirpate it in this life. It is left as the subject of trial and of a continual Christian warfare. And this is the opinion of St. Austin and of *the ancients in general.*”

Of this extract from Wall, and the weight of his authority in regard to the opinion of the ancients, we may add most truly that it is accordant with the view of the church of England, and as Mr. Simeon has shewn above, in harmony with the Scriptures, and the doctrine of the reformers.

There are however several difficulties, which it is desirable to consider in order.

The faith of parents and Sponsors effectual through grace for baptismal blessings to children.

It is said by the baptists that every spiritual blessing is connected with and dependant on personal faith: and that in accordance with this view we rightly declare in our catechism that the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by *the faithful* in the Lord’s Supper; the very term “*the faithful,*” limiting the benefits to those who partake in faith. Undoubtedly it does so: but it does not follow, because an adult person receives a sacramental blessing at the Lord’s table only when he partakes in faith, that in the other sacrament of baptism, the Lord has no blessing for an infant because

he cannot have faith: for this indeed would be limiting the gifts and grace of God in a most unscriptural way, and making it absolutely impossible for an infant to be blessed at all.

Blessings constantly given through the faith of others, St. James v. 15, 16. 1 Cor. vii. 16. Mark ii. 5. The whole Bible teems with proofs how constantly God blesses some through the instrumentality of others. The prayer of faith saves the sick (St. James, v. 15.) The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man (for *a nation* or for *friends*) availeth much, (St. James, v. 16.) The husband is to remain with his unbelieving wife with the hopes of saving her (1 Cor. vii. 16). The faith (and this is an instance most beautifully apposite) of those who let the poor palsied man down through the roof to Jesus was blessed to his restoration. “When Jesus saw *their* faith he said unto the sick of the palsy, son, thy sins be forgiven thee, (Matt. ii. 5.) It is true that the faith here spoken of may be that possessed by the palsied man as well as by those who brought him: but it is remarkable that the whole account in each of the evangelists goes to represent the friends as the active procurers of the benefit, and the man himself as passive. But if Jesus healed the palsied man and forgave him his sins, as well on account of the faith of those who brought him as of his own, can we doubt of his grace and blessing and pardon to the little ones who are brought to Him, in his own ordinance and by His own command, by their parents?

*How far
the faith
of others
indispens-
sible.*

It is said by others that the blessing of baptism to infants depends entirely upon the faith of those who bring them to the font. Many, in consequence, are much disturbed because they doubt whether a lively faith was exercised when they were baptized. Undoubtedly the faith of parents and sponsors must bring a great blessing to the little one; but it is one thing to set a high value on such faith and quite another to say that the whole efficacy of the ordinance depends upon it. The church, in her Articles, certainly holds no such doctrine. Indeed she may be considered to have set the seal of her entire disapprobation upon it in her twenty-sixth Article, respecting the validity of sacraments. The doctrine of *Intention*, in other words that Article of the Romish faith which makes the intention of the minister necessary to the validity of the sacraments, is allied to

*It is the
church, by
its minis-
ters, that
baptizes.*

this error. It is the church that baptizes, or rather the Holy Spirit through the church's instrumentality, and not the individual minister or the persons that bring the child. There is a beautiful passage on this subject in the writings of the evangelical Augustin. It would seem from the passage as if parents had got a superstitious notion that baptism was useful as guarding their little ones from bodily harm and sickness. "Let not that disturb you that some do not bring their infants to baptism with that faith (or purpose) that they may, by spiritual grace, be regenerated to

*Quota-
tion from
St. Au-
gustin.*

eternal life, but because they think they do procure or preserve their bodily health by this remedy. For the children *do not fail of being regenerated* because they are *not brought* by the others with *this intention*. For the necessary offices are performed by them, &c., and the Holy Spirit that dwells in the saints, out of whom that silver *dove* that is but one, is by the fire of charity compacted, does what He does sometimes by the means of men not only simply ignorant but also damnably unworthy. For infants are offered for the receiving of spiritual grace not so much by those in whose hands they are brought (though by those too if they be good and faithful Christians) as by the whole congregation of saints and faithful men. For they are rightly said to be offered by all those whose *The whole church of the saints does this as a mother.* desire it is that they should be so offered, and by whose holy and united charity they are assisted towards the communication of the Holy Spirit. So that the whole church of the saints does this office as a mother," &c.

It is this view of baptism which has, undoubtedly, led our church to prescribe in her rubric that it should be administered on Sundays or holidays, and that too in the middle of the service, (*viz.*) after the reading of the second lesson. For she declares this to be her object among others—"that the congregation then present may testify the receiving of them that be newly baptized into the number of Christ's church."

Baptism should be during the services as presented by the rubric.

It is greatly to be desired, as has been observed before, that the direction of the rubric in this particular should be generally followed. It must be a great comfort to Christian parents to be upheld by the prayers of the congregation in presenting their little ones to God; and it must be no inconsiderable comfort to thoughtful persons in after life, to be certified that when they were put into the ark of Christ's covenant they were borne as it were upon the prayers of the faithful in the congregation who were present, and because present were assisting in the baptism.

Baptist objection answered.

The baptist may tell a person belonging to the church, that though he was christened at church, and the church minister performed the service, and his parents were present, yet that the minister perhaps was careless, and the parents thoughtless, and then he may triumphantly ask, what good can it all have done? The answer is plain. It was the church, and not the minister or the parents, that administered the sacrament. The church received me into her bosom by the command of her master, Jesus Christ. The congregation was present and offered up their prayers for vital blessings and real regeneration. And even if the minister was cold and the friends were careless, may we not humbly hope that

Presence of Christ at his own ordinance.

Christ was present in his high priestly office. For it is difficult to conceive that he is not in some manner present at his own ordinances rightly (ritè)

performed by those who have authority given them in his own church to perform them.—“He ever liveth to make intercession.” He is the High priest and Head of the church. We know his care for infants by his outward gesture towards them and his language about them when on earth. This care is still further confirmed by the provision which he has made for their admission into the covenant. And can we suppose that he who thus cares for them will withdraw altogether his presence and blessing at that sweet and solemn ordinance, at which it most concerns them that he should be present? Can we suppose that, because men desert their duty he omits his care? and that because they do not pray, He does not intercede?

We may, therefore, reasonably, scripturally, and yet humbly conclude, that in all cases where baptism is rightly performed, according to the ordinance of Christ, its institutor, and by his appointed ministers, there it is valid and effectual, and those who are thus stamped with the seal of Christ are recognized by Him as the legitimate objects of his care and privileged members of his family.

By whom baptism may be performed. But is there any real limitation in regard to the persons who are empowered to perform the office of baptism? This is a serious question in England at present, for every sect assumes to itself the power. It is not our object to determine the rights of others.* All that we, as

* Afterwards this came to be the rule that they that came to the Catholic church, from such sects as used not

ministers of the church of England have to ascertain and to declare is, the basis of our own authority.* In regard to this, it is in the first place evident, that the office of baptizing has, from the earliest times, been generally confined to ordained ministers. It is true that the Romish church, in order to magnify what they declared to be the indispensable importance of the sacrament, allowed laymen or midwives to baptize. They did this consistently with their dogma, that salvation was impossible without baptism. "Nulla salus extra ecclesiam," was and is their unalterable tenet, and no child was in the church till it was baptized, therefore, unless baptized, no child could, under this rule, be saved. There was also another reason which operated with them. It was their constant aim to magnify the eucharist, confirmation, &c., and one way of doing this was the throwing something of slight, not to say dishonour, on the sacrament of baptism.

the right form of baptism, (In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,) must be baptized at their admission but not otherwise.—Wall, chap. v. sec. 6, part ii.

The Paulianists were excepted from this rule because of their denial of the Godhead of Christ.

The above view has been generally taken by the more moderate men in the church.

* We would not for a moment be thought to imply, by anything here said, that we depart from the opinion of our own blessed Reformers, and unchurch either our brethren in the North or on the Continent. Neither on the other hand let it be conceived, that we think they have committed a light offence in throwing off episcopacy. When it *was* first thrown off, it was only justified by those who did it on the plea of absolute necessity.

In the second place our Lord's commission to preach and to baptize, was not to Christians in general, but to the eleven. See Matt. xxviii. 18—20. It is evident from this that he intended a distinction between them and the rest of believers in the points there mentioned.

In the third place, this commission extends (at any rate to us who are ministers,) to us, because in the church of England we have been ordained in regular succession from them. It is only on this hypothesis that his words (v. 20.) can be fulfilled—"Lo I am with you *always*, even to the end of the world." He could only be with them in the execution of their high commission, by being with those who should succeed them in that commission, for they themselves have long ago been gathered to their fathers. They who have been set apart from their time have been set apart to the same office of preaching and baptizing. *They*, that is, *we*—bear the load and responsibility of the commission, and therefore they, that is, *we*—look in faith for the blessing of His presence for its fulfilment.

Bishop Beveridge's opinion on "As the Father," &c. In the fourth place we have our Lord's other words, (John xx. 21, 22). "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you." These words, according to Bishop Beveridge,* gave to the apostles the same right of sending others as

* *Primæ ordinationis virtute (apostoli) evangelium prædicabant, hâc autem ultimâ (John xx. 21, 22,) Episcopi jam creati Christique absentis vices in terris suppletes et ipsi alios procrearunt.*

that by which Christ had sent them; for as the Father sent the Son to preach and *to appoint others*, so the Son sent the apostles to preach and *to appoint others*. The members of the sentence are so constructed as to imply strict parallelism; but the parallel is not strict, the similarity is quite incomplete unless to the power of preaching be added the power also of setting others apart to preach, and in accordance with this Timothy and Titus were ordained and consecrated, and ordained and consecrated others. Baptism (says Hooker, Book V. § 61.) by *any man* in the case of *necessity*, was the voice of the whole world heretofore. Neither is Tertullian, Epiphanius, Augustin, or any

Episcopi autem ab apostolis ordinati eandem ab iis episcopalem accipiebant auctoritatem quam ipsi a Christo, siquidem spiritus in eos a Christo sufflatus per manuum eorum impositionem in alios quoque diffusus est.—Cotelerii Patr. Apost. p. 541, vol. 1.

The opinion of so learned and so holy a man as Bishop Beveridge, cannot be without its weight. But while this is true it must also be confessed, that the apostolic commission without apostolic truth, is a poor thing indeed. In regard to those who profess it, it ought to impress upon their minds the high responsibility of their position, as its abuse and desecration must subject them to the most awful condemnation. In regard to those who are their flock, it ought to call forth most earnest prayers from them that their pastors may be in reality what they are in profession, and that to the external call may be added the internal spirit; for there cannot be a more fearful position than that of a minister regularly set apart and ordained, and in possession of every ministerial credential except that great one which is necessary to the exercise of all; it is what a creation would be without any light to play upon and fructify it, like a world without a sun; a chaos were nearly as good.

other of the ancients against it. The boldness of such as pretending Tecla's example took openly upon them both baptism and all other public functions of priesthood, Tertullian severely controuleth, saying—"To give baptism is, in truth, the bishop's right; after him it belongeth unto priests and deacons; but not to them without authority from him received. For so the honour of the church requireth, which being kept, preserveth peace. Were it not in this respect the laity might do the same; all sorts might give, even as all sorts receive." But because emulation is the mother of schism, "Let it content thee, which art of the order of laymen, to do it in necessity, when the state of time or place or person thereunto compelleth. For then is their boldness privileged that help, when the circumstance of other mens dangers craveth it."

It will be seen here that Tertullian rests the matter on the honour of the church. We suppose he means that Christ has authorized his church to baptize, and that only the properly appointed governors of the church (*i.e.*) the bishops, can give the authority to perform this ordinance. This is according to the discipline of our own church. "Take thou authority to preach the word of God, and to minister the Holy Sacraments in the congregation, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto."—
Ord. of Priest.

In the ordination of deacons the words are "Take thou authority to execute the office of deacon, &c." leaving it to be gathered from other sources (after what follows) what exactly that

office is. The converts at Ephesus were not baptized, except with John's baptism, until Paul came and baptized them, or authorized others to do so.

Philip, only an evangelist, as deacons in our own church are, baptized the eunuch.

Summary. We have thus considered, in conclusion, three difficulties connected with baptism—*first*, the real blessing which may be expected in the ordinance from the faith of parents and sponsors; *secondly*, that though such blessing may be scripturally and in faith expected, still that it is not indispensable, for it is the Church that really baptizes her members, and not the individual minister or the faith of the persons, who may happen to be present: *thirdly*, that whatever may be said or thought of the validity of lay and dissenting baptism, it is the peculiar comfort of the members of the church of England that they receive the ordinance from the hands of those who, with the apostolic commission, have received the promise of the accompanying presence of Christ in all the ordinances which, according to that commission they celebrate.

The great point then which remains is, to get as clear a notion as possible of the benefits of baptism. There is no doubt but that the church holds baptismal regeneration, there is none that she holds that every child rightly baptized is regenerate. The question is then as to the *exact meaning of baptismal regeneration.*

CHAP. V.

CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS.

THE great object which remains for us is to obtain as clear a notion of the effects of baptism, and the meaning of baptismal regeneration, by considering some of the difficulties and objections which are usually advanced.

One difficulty is that which relates to the benefit, whether given or sealed by and at the time of baptism. On this we would observe that it is one thing to seal the child in a covenant relation to God, and to seal the aid already promised to the children of Christians of the Holy Spirit, and to assure the parent at the time, as well as the child subsequently, that the Holy Spirit's aid is really and truly given; but it is another to use expressions which seem to imply that there is a change effected in the child's nature, so that the child is decidedly made at that time a child of godly disposition and character, corresponding in fact and in truth to those of the Father that has adopted and sealed it.

We would request the reader to refer to the extract from Augustin (Note, p. 142.) That farther explains how, at the developement of

the understanding, the child becoming acquainted with the force of baptismal privileges and engagement, squares himself to the true meaning of it. This same view has been beautifully but somewhat obscurely expanded in letters by the Rev. F. Maurice.

We would not, indeed, be understood to imply that transforming grace may not accompany baptism. Neither would we for a moment seem to lower the value of baptismal blessings. We would, on the contrary, place no limit to the largeness of the expectations which a Christian parent may legitimately form of blessings to his child through baptism, followed up by an education in *faith* on God's *faithfulness*, and in prayer for the constant and continued aid of the Holy Spirit, which has been already sealed. Our whole treatise will shew that we are not disposed to lower the value of baptismal blessings. At the same time we object to those expressions which seem to imply, that the baptized infant is really holier than the aged saint, however saint-like can ever be. We know that it is said, that there being no resistance in the *will* of the child, grace does in consequence its perfect work. And our Lord's words, xviii. Luke 17, are quoted to prove this, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." We leave them before the reader with this observation—that while we highly value them as indications of the mind of our Lord towards little children, still they seem very insufficient to support the view which they are adduced to uphold. It seems strange, more-

over, to exalt their, at best, passive innocence, above the holiness wrought out in the saints by the spirit of sanctification, through a long series of hard and heavy probationary trials: especially as it is this very kind of holiness elaborated in a world of mingled good and evil, which it seems to be God's special object to produce in the hearts of his people.

We would add that there is, however, enough in Scripture, in respect to baptism, to make men extremely cautious how they strip it of mystery. We have pointed out, in considering the article, what are the particular texts which seem to invest baptism with a mysterious character. Whatever be the meaning of regeneration, it cannot prevent the necessity of conversion. In adult persons conversion must precede baptismal regeneration: in infants, notwithstanding their baptism, they must, generally speaking, be called to conversion, and they *are* constantly converted. In some, no doubt, Christian principle seems to grow with natural growth. In these, therefore, constant renewal is that which is required. Every parent should pray, should strive, should watch, should wait for this blessing for his child. If Mr. Budd's recommendation were really carried out, we should have, we verily believe, a godly generation in this land.

Baptism We have shewn above how a child
the bow of may be regenerated of the Spirit, born
the new of God, and made a member of Christ,
covenant. in one respect, and not in another.
 And these, we hesitate not to say, are the bene-

fits which baptism seals to the child. All is peace and love on God's part, the partition wall of Adamitish descent is broken down, baptism is the bow* of the new covenant heaven, and the sign of hope and mercy to the child; hope and mercy, which but for the new covenant into which it is taken, it never could have been admitted to.

We know that those who take a limited view of Scripture will object to these statements. They are litteralists, who say that begotten means begotten, regenerated—regenerated, saved—saved, and so on; and that therefore when it is said (1 Peter iii. 21.) that baptism doth now save us, we have no right to say that salvation is through faith alone. Now a reference to other passages will clear us of this objection. We are said to be saved by hope (Rom. viii. 24.) Again (2 Pet. iii. 15.) “The long suffering of the Lord is salvation;” and if Jude had written “others save with baptism,” as he has written “others save with fear,” how triumphantly would his words have been cited! It is evident that the precise meaning of save or salvation, in

* We receive also and allow the sacraments of the church, that is, the sacred signs and ceremonies which Christ commanded us to use, that He might by them represent to our eyes the mysteries of our salvation, and most strongly confirm the faith we have in His blood, and seal in our hearts His grace; and we call them figures, signs, types, antitypes, forms, seals, prints or signets, similitudes, examples, images, remembrances and memorials, with Tertullian, Origen, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Jérôme, St. Chrysostom, St. Basil and Dionysius and many other Catholic fathers.—Jewel. Apol. ch. ii. s. ii.

such cases, must be derived from considering the word or the thing which in the context is the instrumental cause of it. The meaning of the verb must be interpreted by the substantive not the substantive, be it faith or fear, baptism or hope, derive its power from the verb.

Laver of regeneration—its meaning. Again, it is asked, "If the laver of regeneration means, as it certainly does, the water or washing of baptism, what right has any one to say that it is

only the laver of the *sign* of the new birth? We answer that we do not say so. We say that the Holy Spirit's aid is sealed to the child in baptism, because baptism is the admission seal into the new covenant, and one of the great blessings of the new covenant is the promise of the Holy Spirit. We say moreover that there may be a new birth of hope as well as of actual life, and that the very reason why the kingdom of Christ the second Adam, is called the regeneration, is that it is the kingdom of new hope and life to man, taking the place of the old kingdom of despair and death, of which the first Adam was the head. We say, moreover, that to be admitted to the family of God on earth, to be made members of Christ,

It does not over describe the privilege of the new state. and to have the sealing of the Spirit's aid, and all this, for creatures who were without hope and without God in the world, is most surely not over described when it is called regeneration.

"He hath *begotten us again* to a *lively hope* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

At any rate, therefore, baptism is the *only door*, so to speak, by which entrance can be

rightly had into the kingdom of Christ on earth. Repentance and faith, through grace, will make men members of the invisible church, as see below the passage from Cyril in respect to Cornelius; but it is only by baptismal admission, that they become members of the visible. To this double membership, it is highly probable that our Lord alluded in his conversation with Nicodemus. It is remarkable that the word regenerate or regeneration (Palingenesia,) is only twice used in the New Testament, although there are other expressions which are equivalent. In these two cases, however, the word does not imply that, which it is generally used by the puritan divines to mean. In the one in St. Matthew it evidently means this new and altered dispensation or state of things, into which baptism is the door of entrance appointed by our Lord; and in Titus, chap. iii. v. 5, it *must* signify baptism.

Salvation of baptized infants who die in infancy. But another difficulty still remains, and it respects the salvation of infants baptized dying in infancy. There does not appear to us to be any very great difficulty here, unless to those who believe that there is no salvation without baptism. Undoubtedly to grown persons salvation is by grace through faith. It is not less certain that to baptized infants who die salvation is by grace through baptism.*

* There is a beautiful passage in the works of St. Augustin, in which he compares the case of the thief on the cross, saved by grace through faith and without bap-

But the enquirer goes further; he asks how can an infant be saved unless baptism be a purifying agent, rendering the subject meet for heaven? How can the child go to heaven unless he be first changed on earth?

(1.) In answer we would say, *in the first place*, that the same difficulty occurs in regard to circumcision. It was by God's own appointment that the Jewish male child was not circumcised till the eighth day; in other words he was not till that time put into covenant with God; and it may be asked, with the same force, in regard to a Jewish child dying before circumcision, how could the child inherit the heavenly Canaan, not having during life been made an inheritor of the earthly? We must add that it was because the Jewish child had a previous right to circumcision that he was circumcised; and it is, we believe, because the child of Christian parents has a previous right to the blessings of the Christian covenant that he is baptized.

(2.) To this we may add another question, which places an opposite difficulty against it. And it tism, with that of little infants saved by grace through baptism, and without faith, because faith and baptism being both generally necessary to salvation, either may be dispensed with, when from the nature of the case it is a moral impossibility that they should be found.—Aug. de Bapt. contra Donatistis, da lib. 4.

* Hooker says, "It is not to be thought that He, which as it were from Heaven, hath nominated and designed them to holiness by *special privilege of their very birth*, will himself deprive them of regeneration and inward grace, only because necessity depriveth them of outward sacrament."

is this—Does baptism do more for a child than for an adult? We suppose not. But repentance and faith are necessary for an adult before he can be admitted to baptism; and surely if the adult repents and believes, and yet has unavoidably no opportunity of being baptized, he is saved through repentance and faith without baptism. Baptism, therefore, is as expressed in the church catechism only *generally* necessary to salvation. And if so it follows that there is not a saving change of that kind connected with its administration, which should make us conceive either that a dying baptized infant is saved *by* his baptism, or that an infant dying unbaptized is lost because he is not baptized.

(3.) But again it may be said—Is there no difference between the two? Most certainly there is in this respect. The baptized infant has been visibly and really introduced into the new covenant; he is seen like the family of Noah in the ark, God having himself introduced him and made fast the door; and therefore we know that he is safe: and whatever may be the case with those little ones who are not so introduced into the covenant, this, at least, we may say, that it were a strange thing if God having given us this sign of His covenant mercy, and having commanded us to use it and seal our children with it, we should nevertheless so little esteem it as to derive no confidence and comfort from its administration, looking on our children after baptism exactly as we regarded them before. It is not certainly thus that the church teaches us, when she declares—“ It is certain by God’s word

that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved."

Reason why the church pronounces a baptized infant, if it die, to be undoubtedly saved. The reason is here hinted at; the infant has committed no actual sin—as therefore it has the inherited guilt of the old Adam, by natural birth, it is introduced to the inheritance of the righteousness of Christ, not infused but imputed, by the new and spiritual birth; for, "as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life," (Rom. v. 18.) The whole passage (Rom. v.) shews that the justifying work of Christ is equal at least in its effects to the condemning work of Adam. Many, perhaps, have been puzzled by this passage and the verses in connection with it, because unless all who are affected by the sin of Adam, (that is, the whole world), are actually saved by the work and righteousness of Christ, they do not see how the expressions are strictly true. The difficulty is removed by remembering that the work of Christ *reconciles God to man. The atonement is made for all.* Sin clouded the face of Almighty love, so that God, consistently with justice, could not look on man with favour. Christ's work has removed the cloud. God now shines forth on man, and He speaks in gospel tones—"I am reconciled to you, your sin is atoned for, be ye reconciled to me."

But still it may be asked, how can the child go to heaven without a changed heart. In

answer, but without admitting the conclusion, we say, these things are beyond our comprehension. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," &c., "so is every one that is born of the Spirit." It must be remembered, however, that next to the pardon of sin by the atonement, the gift of the Spirit is the great purchase of Christ for his people, and that it is specially sealed in baptism. The will has not yet power to exercise itself. But it is the will that is in special rebellion. If, then, the power of the Spirit be exerted, and the rebel will be not yet able to resist, there is a means evident, by which the heart may be rendered meet for God and heaven. God may, by His power, extinguish this rebellious principle in the *act of death*. We know that in none, not even in the aged saint, is it quite extinguished *until that hour*. Both principles are perpetually striving in all God's saints, and it is not until the hour of dissolution, that that which is born of the flesh ceases to oppose that which is born of the Spirit. Conversion, we conceive, to be the overcoming of the tendency to evil by the new principle of good, so that though the tendency to evil remain, the tendency to good is greater, and ordinarily predominant. If this be so, there is no difficulty in supposing that the infant not having yet attained the power of working evil, may by the gentlest power and process of the Holy Spirit, be solicited and bent to good. *But it does not follow from thence, that the effect is produced in baptism and only in baptism, for then we must conceive baptism to do far more for the babe than for a*

grown person, and all unbaptized infants to be without any hope at all.

Still again, it must be a real comfort, nay, more than this, a solid ground of peaceful trust to bereaved parents, to know that their children were baptized before they died, for having been admitted by Christ's own command to his church below, there cannot be a doubt that they will be received into his church above; and if this be so we need not dwell on the blessing of infant baptism in every case, and its immense value in the cases of infant death. The parish minister has multiplied opportunities of seeing the anguish of the torn hearts of mothers when their babes are taken from them; he witnesses their deep anxiety about their infants' state, their longings for certainty in respect to their salvation, and he has numberless opportunities too, of witnessing the balm and the comfort conveyed to them by the seal of baptism, Heaven's own seal, engraven so to speak, by God himself, and that additional rest which they find in the voice of the church, expressed in respect to that seal, "that it is certain, from God's word, that children dying in their infancy after baptism are undoubtedly saved."

The difficulty, it should again be observed, is not so much as to the mode in which baptized infants, dying in their infancy are to be saved, but how we are to conceive so very different an effect produced by baptism in infants from that which is produced in grown persons,* for it is

* There is an interesting passage in Cyril on this very

a strange thing to say that baptism gives the seed at least of a new nature and heart to a child, but that it bestows no such gift on an adult; and this must be so, according to the view taken by many, for those very blessed fruits, repentance and faith, are required previous to baptism in adults, but are the very objects of baptism in children; in other words, according to this view, baptism in infants sows the seed which is to produce in after life those very things which, in the case of adults, are required to be in existence before baptism be administered. "If thou believest, said Philip to the Eunuch, thou mayest be baptised." "Repent, therefore, said Peter, and be baptized." "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, as well as we?" Acts x. 47.

Answer to questions often asked respecting the benefits of infant baptism. It is our desire to leave the matter here. It is not wise to pry too closely into mysteries, and who, except the hard and cold rationalist, will deny that the sacraments are mysterious? We would add, moreover,—who but such would ask, "what is the benefit

subject. It is as follows:—He is pressing the necessity of water as well as Spirit in baptism. "Cornelius was a great man, he was honoured with visions of angels; he had raised his prayers and alms in the sight of God as a goodly monument in the heavens. Peter came and the Spirit was poured on them that believed, &c. Yet after the gift of the Spirit, the Scripture saith that Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ: that the soul having been regenerated through their faith, the body also by means of water might share the gift."—Pt. 1, vol. ii. Lib. of the Fathers, p. 27.

of infant baptism? because being much involved in mystery, it is not easy quite clearly to declare it?—or again, who but such would ask the question, which is often put, when we say that a baptized infant dying, is certainly saved.” Then do you assert that if unbaptized it is not saved? We have nothing to do with such questions. The only matter for us to consider is, whether the ordinance is of Christ. If it be so, we hold that it must carry a blessing with it, and we need scarcely add, that if it be so, as on the one hand it is a most fearful thing to despise, if so on the other, it ought to be a most blessed and joyful thing to embrace it. The reader will not be sorry to read on the general matter the judgment of the judicious Hooker:—

The necessity of sacraments unto the participation of Christ. “It greatly offendeth, that some, when they labour to shew the use of the holy sacraments, assign unto them no end, but only to teach the mind by other senses that which the Word doth teach by hearing. Whereupon, how easily neglect and careless regard of so heavenly mysteries may follow, we see in part by some experience had of those men with whom that opinion is most strong. For where the Word of God may be heard, which teacheth with much more expedition and more full explication any thing we have to learn, if all the benefit we receive by sacraments be instruction, they which at all times have opportunity of using the better mean to that purpose will surely hold the worse in less estimation. And unto infants, which are not capable of instruction, who would not think

it a mere superfluity that any sacrament is administered, if to administer the sacraments be but to teach receivers what God doth for them? There is of sacraments therefore, undoubtedly, some other more excellent and heavenly use. Sacraments, by reason of their mixed nature, are more diversely interpreted and disputed of than any other parts of religion besides; for that in so great store of properties belonging to the selfsame thing, as every man's wit hath taken hold of some especial consideration above the rest, so they have accordingly seemed one to cross another, as touching their several opinions about the necessity of sacraments; whereas in truth their disagreement is not great. For, let respect be had to the duty which every communicant doth undertake, and we may well determine concerning the use of sacraments, that they serve as bonds of obedience to God, strict obligations to the mutual exercise of Christian charity, provocations to godliness, preservations from sin, memorials of the principal benefits of Christ: respect the time of their institution, and it thereby appeareth, that God hath annexed them for ever unto the New Testament, as other rites were before with the Old; regard the weakness which is in us, and they are warrants for the more security of our belief; compare the receivers of them with such as receive them not, and sacraments are marks of distinction to separate God's own from strangers: so that in all these respects, they are found to be most necessary. But their chiefest force and virtue consisteth not herein, so much as in that they are

heavenly ceremonies which God hath sanctified and ordained to be administered in his church: first, as marks whereby to know when God doth impart the vital or saving grace of Christ unto all that are capable thereof; and, secondly, as means conditional, which God requireth in them unto whom he imparteth grace. For, sith God in himself is invisible, and cannot by us be discerned working, therefore when it seemeth good in the eyes of his heavenly wisdom that men for some special intent and purpose should take notice of his glorious presence, he giveth them some plain and sensible token whereby to know what they cannot see. For Moses to see God and live was impossible; yet Moses by fire knew where the glory of God extraordinarily was present, (Exodus iii. 2.) The angel by whom God endued the waters of the pool, called Bethesda, with supernatural virtue to heal, was not seen of any; yet the time of the angel's presence known by the troubled motions of the waters themselves, (John v. 4.) The apostles, by fiery tongues which they saw, were admonished when the Spirit, which they could not behold, was upon them, (Acts ii. 3.) In like manner it is with us. Christ and his Holy Spirit, with all their blessed effects, though entering into the soul of man, we are not able to apprehend or express how, do notwithstanding give notice of the times when they use to make their access, because it pleaseth Almighty God to communicate by sensible means those blessings which are incomprehensible. Seeing, therefore, that grace is a consequent of sacra-

ments, a thing which accompanieth them as their end, a benefit which they have received from God himself, the Author of sacraments, and not from any other natural or supernatural quality in them; it may be hereby both understood, that sacraments are necessary, and that the manner of their necessity to life supernatural is not in all respects as food unto natural life, because they contain in themselves no vital force or efficacy; they are not physical, but moral instruments of salvation, duties of service and worship; which unless we perform as the Author of Grace requireth, they are unprofitable: for, *all receive not the grace of God, which receive the sacraments of His grace.* Neither is it ordinarily His will to bestow the grace of sacraments on any but by the sacraments; which grace also, they that receive by sacraments or with sacraments, receive it *from Him*, and *not from them.* For of sacraments, the very same is true which Solomon's wisdom observeth in the Brazen Serpent,* "He that turned towards it, was not healed by the thing he saw, but by Thee, O Saviour of all," (Wisd. xvi. 7.) This is therefore the necessity of sacraments."†

Various modes of using scripture terms, sanctify, regenera- It is our hope and belief, that nothing that has been written in this tract, has violated the line of thought and conduct, which we have above recommended. To preserve this conduct, it

* 'Spiritus Sancti munus est gratiam implere mysterii.' Ambros. in Luc. cap. iii. (l. ii. § 79.) 'Sanctificatis elementis effectum non propria ipsorum natura præbet, sed virtus divina potentius operatur. Cypr. de Chrism. (c. 2.)

† Hopkins' Works, vol. 1. p. 593.

tion, saint, children of God, members of Christ. is absolutely necessary that we should remember the difference of sense and meaning in which the same words and terms are used in Scripture. It is evident, for instance, that the word election is used both nationally and personally, that it is applied to Christ and even to Angels—that sanctification is sometimes setting apart by baptism, as 1 Cor. vii. 14, and perhaps 1 Pet. i. 2. and sometimes the communication of spiritual holiness—sometimes mere setting apart as John 17—19, 1st part, sometimes purifying by vicarious offices of devotion, as Job i. 5. sometimes ceremonial, (as 2 Cor. vii. 14, 1st part of verse.) Again, regeneration is said to be by different instruments, as 1 Pet. i. 3, by resurrection figuratively, and verse 23, by the word of God, and John iii. 5, of water and of the Spirit. What is said of sanctification, is equally applicable to the word saints. They are so called by profession or by character. Baptism gives saintly profession, and therefore in this sense, all the baptized are saints, having been all sanctified or set apart for God by baptism, but the higher sense of the term *saint*, is that which is derived from the possession of personal holiness. In the former or wider sense, faithful is used as contradistinctive to infidel, as in the prayer for Good Friday “infidels”* are prayed for, as embracing all the heathen, and so distinguished from “the faithful” or the professing adherents of Christ. In using the term *saint*, therefore,

* “Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels and Heretics.”—Coll. for Good Friday.

as descriptive of those who are possessors of saintly character, it would be safe generally to prefix the epithet of *true* or some other of a similar kind; otherwise the Scriptures become unintelligible to those who carry the language of sermons and devotional works to the interpretation of the Bible, and who are surprized, in consequence, to find churches of saints judaizing like the Galatian, or corrupted and full of dissent and schism like the Corinthian, or cold and dead like the Laodicean. The same remark may be made in respect to the use of those other terms, "*children of God*," "*members of Christ*," which are descriptive generally of all baptized persons, and are declaratory of God's good will and covenant relation to them. When used by preachers and writers to describe the inner church, if I may so speak, the assembly of those who love God as their Father, and Christ as their Saviour, Head, and Brother, they should be preceded by some such epithet as *true* or *faithful*, to show that they have the *character* of God's children as well as childlike privileges. It is, probably, in this view that St. Paul sometimes uses the term "*faithful*," (saints and faithful brethren), though in the days of the early church, when profession was a matter of such excessive danger and worldly loss, there was at first less likelihood of confusion.

Privileges in Scripture are arguments for cha- There is, it may be added, a constant reference in Scripture to privileges, as arguments for character. "As many," says St. Paul, (Gal. iii. 27.)

racter, “ as have been baptized unto Christ, Gal. iii. 27. have put on Christ.” This is spoken Rom. xiii. of privilege and profession, “ Put ye 14. 3 Col. on the Lord Jesus Christ,” (Rom. xiii. 14.) This is evidently spoken of character, for it is addressed to those who, by profession, had put Christ on. So again the whole of the third chapter of Colossians has a baptismal basis, for it is only the practical carrying out and enforcement of those duties and that life which a baptized Christian ought to live. Thus, for example, (iii. 1.) “ If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above,” &c. What does the apostle mean but that baptism represents their burial with Christ and their rising with Him, and that they, *if they are true disciples*, must, by their heavenly desires, evidence their new and heavenly calling and state. So again (Col. iii. 3.), “ For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God,” and (v. 5.) “ *mortify* therefore or put to death, or more emphatically “ *make dead bodies* of” (*νεκρωσατε*) your members which are upon earth, &c. Here we see that the first expression (v. 3.) denotes their state of privilege into which baptismal profession had placed them, and the second the character of life which they were in consequence called to lead.

So again (v. 9.) to the same purpose. For if St. Paul had not meant that they had put on the new man by profession in baptism, he could not in the same breath have told them that they were clothed with the new garments, and yet exhorted them not to lie one to the other.

But while all this is true, and while it cannot but be acknowledged to be so by every candid and thoughtful Christian, and while it most fully justifies the use of the expressions, "child of God," "member of Christ," there is one other class of difficulties connected with baptismal blessings which it is right to notice.

Difficulty of expression in baptismal service—re-generate by Thy Holy Spirit.

We are told that baptism is by the Spirit, (1 Cor. xii. 13,) "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit," and this latter expression is particularly remarkable, when compared with that (1 Cor. x. 4, 5,) and did all drink of the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. But, Rom. viii. 9. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," and to shew that this possession of the Spirit of Christ is a vital possession affecting the heart, the following verse goes on to declare—"If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." How it may be asked can a man be "none of Christ's" and yet a "member of Christ?" Only, we answer, by profession, (or) How, again, can a man have the sealing of the Spirit in baptism, and yet not possess the Spirit of Christ at all? We answer again, by referring to what we have before stated on the general operations of the Spirit on the

hearts of all, and the more special operation on true believers. The wind may breathe on a sail, and yet the ship may be too heavy to be moved. The Spirit may have been from infancy soliciting the individual, but the dead momentum of corruption or the active principle of sin, may have hitherto effectually resisted it.*

* The following passage from Waterland will be curious and interesting to the reader :—

He thus states the distinction between regeneration and renovation. “ Man does not regenerate himself, whatever hand he may otherwise have (but still under grace,) in preparing or qualifying himself for it. God makes the grant, and it is entirely his act ; man receives only, and is acted upon, though sometimes active in qualifying himself, as in the case of adults, and sometimes entirely passive, as in the case of infants. The thing granted and received is a change from the state natural into the state spiritual, and translation from the curse of Adam into the grace of Christ.

“ This change carries in it many privileges, but all reducible to *two* ; remission of sins, and a covenant claim, for the time being, to eternal happiness. These blessings may all be forfeited or finally lost, if a person revolts from God, either for a time or for ever ; and then such a person is no longer in a regenerate state with respect to any saving effects ; but still God’s original grant stands in full force to take place as often as any revolter shall return, and if he desires to be as before, he will not want to be regenerated again, but renewed or reformed. The grant once made continues always the same ; but the reception may vary, because it depends upon the condition of the recipient. Renovation is rather capacity or qualification (in adults), for salutary regeneration than the regeneration itself ; it may and it should be in them before, in, and after baptism. Preventing grace must go before, to work faith and repentance : afterwards in baptism, the Holy Spirit fixes, as it were, his dwelling, renewing the heart in greater measure ; and if his motions are more and more complied with, the

The whole economy (says Bishop Hopkins) and dispensation of the kingdom of Christ is managed by the Spirit of Christ, so that those who are internally sanctified are regenerated by his effectual operation, and those who are only externally sanctified are regenerated by his public institution, (*i.e.* are made members of the dispensation of the regeneration). Infants, therefore, are in baptism regenerated by the Holy Ghost, because the Holy Spirit of God appoints the ordinance to receive them into the visible church, which is the regenerate part and

renewing grows through the whole course of the spiritual life. Therefore, though we find no Scripture exhortations made to Christians (for Nicodemus was a Jew) to become regenerated, yet we meet with several to them to be renewed."

On the same subject Jeremy Taylor thus writes :—

"For we must know that there is but one repentance in a man's own life, if repentance be taken in the proper and strict evangelical covenant-sense, and not after the ordinary understanding of the word: that is, we are but once to change our whole estate of life, from the power of the devil and his entire possession, from the state of sin and death, from the body of corruption to the life of grace, to the possession of Jesus, to the kingdom of the gospel, and this done in the baptism of water, *or* in the baptism of the Spirit, when the first rites comes to be verified by God's grace coming upon us, and by our obedience to the heavenly calling, we working together with God. After this change, if ever we fall into the contrary state, and be wholly estranged from God and religion, and profess ourselves servants of unrighteousness, God hath made no more covenant of restitution to us, there is no place left for any more repentance, or entire change of condition, or new birth: a man can be regenerate but once."—*HOLY LIFE*, §9. Of Repentance.

state of the church.—BP. HOPKINS, Vol. II. 426. ON BAPTISM.

It is remarkable, moreover, and should claim our serious consideration, that every gift exercised by any member of the church of Christ, is attributed to the working of the Holy Spirit. "For to one (1 Cor. xii. 8.) is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge," &c. Now we should at first suppose that these gifts, being the dowry of the Spirit, could be received and exercised by none but those who, in the common sense of the phrase, are *spiritually minded*; and yet we know from this very epistle what disorders, what pride, what emulation, existed among those very people that exercised them, and we have only to look to the thirteenth chapter to be convinced that all these gifts might dwell where, nevertheless, love did not inhabit. "Though I have the gift of prophesy, and understand all mysteries, &c., and have not charity I am nothing." It is not to be supposed that the apostle could put an hypothetical case which, by no possibility, could be realized. We must, therefore, conclude that gifts might be, where love was not; and these gifts too the gifts of the Spirit.

After this it becomes perfectly easy to assent to the language of the baptismal service, for we must interpret Scripture according to its literal meaning, and not according to our own preconceived notions. Demas, who returned to the world, as well as Hymeneus and Alexander, whom the apostle excommunicated, had most probably, nay, we may say most certainly had,

in some way, been “enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift and of the powers of the world to come, and yet had fallen away:” Heb. vi. they had been under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and yet they had apostatized.

Such difficulties not confined to baptism.

These difficulties are not confined to baptism. They meet us whenever we attempt curiously or metaphysically to enquire into the operations of the Holy Ghost on the heart of man. It is possible for men “to taste of the heavenly gift,” and yet to fall away, (Heb. vi.) It is possible for the seed of the Word to “spring up for a time” and then to be “choked” by worldly care and worldly lusts. And yet St. John tells us that “the seed remaineth in him, (i. e. in the believer) and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

There is no difficulty here to humble minds. “The wind bloweth where it listeth.” The Spirit’s operations are viewless, inaudible, mysterious. There is an election, a true seed. The election shall be saved, the true seed in the right soil shall blossom and bear fruit. “All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” John x. 28—9.

But while it is more than we can see to be authorized by Scripture, to declare that in all the myriads of unhappy baptized that people the great towns of the land, the seed of God’s transforming grace has been really sown, we are not *A blessing must ac-* the persons to deny that a blessing accompanies Christ’s own ordinance,

company whenever administered.* We leave it
Christ's to those who are disposed to define mys-
ordinance. teries minutely, to declare and define
 what this blessing is. Of this there cannot be a
 doubt that the Holy Ghost is vouchsafed in larger
 measure under this dispensation than that Blessed
 Person was under the patriarchal or prophetic.

Promise “If I go not away the Paraclete cannot
of the Pa- come; and when he shall come he shall
raclete, and reprove the world of sin, of righteous-
remission ness, and of judgment.” John xvi. 7. *It*
of sins *is in this threefold character that He has*
sealed. *been given, and it is in this that He is, we believe,*
sealed to the child in baptism, and will be realized
to him and to his parents to help them in their
child's education, by acting on his corrupt heart
in infancy and in childhood, in bringing early
lessons to his memory, giving counsels and hea-
venly impressions, and even if so despised, warn-
ings and disquietude, amid the lusts and temp-
tations, and the business and bustle of mature
age. It is this, together with the washing away

* Our last position is that *baptism is an ordinary means appointed by Christ, for the real and effectual sanctification of his church.* For this is the great end of all gospel ordinances, that through them might be conveyed that grace (a) which might purify the heart and cleanse the life. And though I do not affirm that baptism doth effect this in all to whom it is rightly applied. Yet this I do affirm and maintain, that there is no reason to doubt the salvation of any who by this holy ordinance are consecrated unto God, until by their actual and wilful sinning, they thrust away from them those benefits which God intends there by it.—Bishop Hopkins, vol. ii. p. 428.

(a) It is evident that *grace* is here used as the quickening vital power of the Holy Spirit.

of the guilt and condemnation of original sin, that we again repeat it to be our belief to be* sealed to the infant or adult in baptism.

This the opinion of the church. It is not our own unsupported opinion that we have here advanced. It is because we believe this to be the doctrine of the church, as interpreting Scripture truth, that we with great confidence insist upon it. On this account she teaches her children to pray—"Take not Thy Holy Spirit from us." On the same account she again teaches us to pray "that we, being regenerate and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Spirit."

The Prayer Book the guide of the catholic church. We would ever remember ourselves, and we would especially remind our brethren, that the Prayer Book in its Articles and Formularies,† contains the Creed of the protestant, and, we

* The ordinance of Baptism has been not unjustly compared to the ceremony of taking up the chartered freedom of a city. All the privileges of the city belong to the freemen; all the blessings of the covenant are the property of the baptized.

† Whosoever (Article xxxiv.) through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the church, *which be not repugnant to the word of God and be ordained and approved by common authority* ought to be rebuked openly.

It were much to be desired that our brethren who dissent from us would more deeply weigh the evils of separation. They do not, we are confident, sufficiently estimate the value of union. They do not consider, as they should, the evil of schism. It may be very well for worldly men to say that competition and emulation produce activity.—Activity in religion, growing out of the soil of any motive

might justly say, catholic* churchman. It is the embodying of the doctrines of the early ancient universal church as *far as they are founded on Holy Scripture*. There is no doctrine within its covers that was not held by antiquity, and there is none which cannot be scripturally proved.† These were the two particulars inva-

but love, is baneful and vicious. The stickling about ceremonies and vestments and music and such matters, in past time has been the bane of religion among us. Even the good Bp. Hooper had scruples of this sort which he had gathered abroad, which were partially overborne, however, by the wiser reasons of Cranmer, Bucer, and Peter Martyr. The great mistake is, the supposition that unity of body is not required by Scripture, and that the unity of spirit can be maintained in a world like this without unity of body. We write this with no feelings but those of love. We are acquainted with excellent persons among the dissenters. We are persuaded that many of them are among God's "Jewels." But it must never be forgotten that a system may in separate instances produce very fair and lovely fruits, which however, in the long run, may be most destructive to a community.

* It seems to have been forgotten by the very body appropriating to itself the name of catholic, that Vincent of Lerins had been unanimously approved in denying it to all who hold not what has been believed, *every where, ever, and by all*. England, happily, was not so rash. Her divines admitted no scholastic sophistry as a sufficient support for questionable principles. They would hear nothing but the clear voices of Scripture and primitive antiquity. Hence *their* work was truly catholic. It bore, as Vincent admirably demands, the genuine stamp of universality, antiquity and consent.—*Soames, Elizabeth, Relig. His. P. 8.*

† The method which they, (the Reformers) followed, was this : First, the whole business they were to consider was divided into so many heads, which were proposed as queries, and these were given out to so many bishops and

riably looked for by its compilers, the first as highly desirable, but the latter as indispensable.

Its compilers. These compilers were Cranmer, archbishop and martyr; Ridley, bishop and martyr; Bishops Holbeach and Goodrick, and Doctors May, Taylor, Heynes, and Cox, of whom it has been well observed that “eight men of greater ability, learning, industry, and integrity, conjoined, could not easily have been brought together in any age or in any country.”

A. D. 1540. divines; and at a prefixed time, every one brought his opinion in writing on all the queries.

This the reader will find in the collection.—Vol. 1. p. 446.

The resolutions of several bishops and divines, of some questions concerning the sacraments; by which it will appear with what maturity and care they proceeded in the Reformation, &c.

1st.—Q. What a sacrament is by the Scripture?

2nd.—Q. What a sacrament is by the ancient authors?

3rd.—Q. How many sacraments there be by the Scripture?

4th.—Q. How many sacraments there be by the ancient authors?

5th.—Q. Whether this word sacrament be and ought to be attributed to the seven only? and whether the seven sacraments be found in any of the old authors? &c. &c.—*Collection of Records*, vol. 2. p. 294.

All this was finished and set forth this year with a preface written by those of the clergy who had been employed in it; declaring with what care they had examined the Scriptures, and the ancient doctors, out of whom they had faithfully gathered this exposition of the Christian faith.—*Burnet, Hist. Reform.* vol. 1. p. 452.

A. D. 1548.

They resolved to retain such things as the primitive church had practised, cutting off such abuses as the later ages had grafted on them; and to continue the use of such other things, which, though they had been brought in not so early, yet were of good use to

It may not be unacceptable to the reader that we should make the following extracts from Hooker.

It must be remembered that the grand controversy between that great man and the puritans, (one of whose champions was (T. C.) Cartwright), concerned the necessity of an exact setting forth in Scripture of every church ordinance, rite, and part of discipline, to the minutest particular. This was carried so far by Cartwright, that he asserted that if a child should incur damnation for want of baptism, and there were no minister present to baptize, it were better that the child should be damned than God's ordinance violated in the least particular, as it would be by lay baptism.

In the following extract Hooker shows that there is a principal, and that there are accidents in almost every thing natural as well as spiritual, and that accidents are not of the essence of the thing, be it natural or be it spiritual.

“Furthermore, because definitions are to express but the most immediate and nearest parts of nature, whereas other principles farther off, although not specified in defining, are notwithstanding in nature implied and presupposed,

beget devotion ; and were so much recommended to the people, by the practice of them, that the laying them aside would perhaps have alienated them from the other changes they made. And therefore they resolved to make no change without very good and weighty reasons ; in which they considered the practice of our Saviour, who did not only comply with the rites of Judaism himself, but even the prayer he gave to his disciples, was framed according to their forms, &c. &c.—*Ibid.* vol. 3. p. 117.

we must note, that inasmuch as sacraments are actions religious and mystical, which nature they have not unless they proceed from a serious meaning (and what every man's private mind is, as we cannot know, so neither are we bound to examine,) therefore always in these cases the known intent of the church generally doth suffice; and where the contrary is not manifest,* we may presume that he which outwardly doth the work, hath inwardly the purpose of the church of God. Concerning all other orders, rites, prayers, lessons, sermons, actions, and their circumstances whatsoever, they are to the outward substance of baptism but things accessory, which the wisdom of the church of Christ is to order according to the exigence of that which is principal. Again, considering that such ordinances have been made to adorn the sacrament,† not the sacrament to depend upon them; seeing also that they are not of the substance of baptism, and that baptism is far more necessary than any such incident rite or solemnity ordained for the better administration thereof:‡ if the case be such as permitteth not baptism to have the decent complements of

* ‘ Si aliquid ministri agere intendant, puta sacris illudere mysteriis, vel aliud quod ecclesiæ non consentiat, nihil agitur: sine fide enim spiritualis potestas exerceri quidem potest, sine ecclesiæ intentione non potest.’ Lancel. Inst. Jur. Can. lib. ii. Tit. ii. 5. Hoc tamen.

† ‘ Accessorium non regulat principale, sed ab eo regulatur.’ 42. De Regul. Jur. in Sext. lib. iii. ff. quod jussu.

‡ ‘ Etsi nihil facile mutandum est ex solemnibus, tamen ubi æquitas evidens poscit, subveniendum est.’ Lib. clxxxiii. de Reg. Jur.

Lay baptism in cases of necessity. baptism, better it were to enjoy the body without his furniture, than to wait for this till the opportunity of that for which we desire it be lost.

Which premises standing, it seemeth to have been no absurd collection, that in cases of necessity, which will not suffer delay till baptism be administered with usual solemnities, it may (to speak the least) be tolerably given without them, rather than any man without it should be suffered to depart this life."

Cartwright says further that "water is of no importance. For even as in another place, Matt. iii. 11, by "fire and the Spirit," he meaneth nothing but the Spirit of God, which purgeth and purifieth as the fire doth; so in this place, John iii. by "water and the Spirit," he meaneth nothing else but the Spirit of God, which cleanseth the filth of sin and cooleth the boiling heat of an unquiet conscience, as water washeth that which is foul and quengeth the heat of fire."

Hooker, in answer, says—"They know that of all the ancients there is not one to be named that ever did otherwise either expound or allege the place, than as implying external baptism. Shall that which hath always * received this and no other construction be now disguised with the toy of novelty? Must we needs, at the only show of a critical conceit, without any more deliberation, utterly condemn them of error, which will not admit that fire in the words of

* 'Minime sunt mutanda, quæ interpretationem certam semper habuerunt.' D. lib. i. tit. 2. lib xxiii.

John is quenched with the name of the Holy Ghost; or, with the name of the Spirit, water dried up in the words of Christ? When the letter of the law hath two things plainly and expressly specified, water and the Spirit; water as a duty required on our parts, the Spirit as a gift which God bestoweth; there is danger in presuming so to interpret it, as if the clause which concerneth ourselves were more than needeth. We may, by such rare expositions, attain perhaps in the end to be thought witty, but with ill advice. Finally, if at*the time when that baptism which was meant by John came to be really and truly performed by Christ himself, we find the apostles that had been, as we are, before baptized, new baptized with the Holy Ghost, and in this their later baptism as well a visible descent of fire, (Acts ii. 3.) as a secret miraculous infusion of the Spirit; if on us He accomplish likewise the heavenly work of our new birth, not with the Spirit alone, but with water thereunto adjoined, sith the faith-fullest expounders of His words are His own deeds, let that which His hand hath manifestly wrought, declare what His speech did doubtfully utter.”†

In addition to what Hooker has here ad-

* “John baptized with water, but you shall within few days be baptized with the Holy Ghost.” Acts i. 5.

† The meaning of which is, that as the giving of the Holy Ghost accompanied by fire, proves that, by “fire” our Lord really meant “fire,” so when he used the word “water,” as the matter of baptism, he really meant that water was to be used.—An argument against the Quakers.

vanced we may well ask what the Quakers have gained in spirituality by setting at naught the outward and prescribed forms of the sacrament? There is always danger in extremes. The overstraining of the grace of the sacraments has a direct tendency to produce the contempt of them, just as the legitimate spawn of popish superstition is, and has been, and always will be infidelity.

Answer to the question about the use of baptism. It is, however, most certainly often asked in the present day “of what use is baptism?” Or it is put thus—“If you say that children dying after baptism are undoubtedly saved, do you mean to say that if they are not baptized they are not saved?”

Now we hold both these questions to be highly improper: not that we mean to stop the anxious inquiry of a bereaved parent whose child has died unbaptized: in such a case the question is both just and natural? and we have no hesitation in saying that the child will not suffer from the want of that which its parents would gladly have given. We will also add that, grievous and unnatural as we believe the error of the baptists to be, in denying baptism to their children, we trust and humbly and earnestly believe that God will not visit upon the souls of the dying little ones the neglect, in many instances quite conscientious, however mistaken, of their parents.

Such questions are cavils. But having said thus much, we again repeat that the questions asked above are highly improper. To ask such

questions is to cavil at Christ's ordinance. For if Christ has really ordained the sacrament of baptism, or that of His own supper, there is no further room for question. If He ordained baptism, He had most assuredly a reason for ordaining it: He does not, he cannot act without a wise object and purpose. And not only this; but as all his purposes are purposes of love and mercy, as his kingdom is a kingdom of *grace*, every act and institution in the administration of this kingdom must be an act and institution of *grace*. There must, therefore, be a *gracious* purpose in the ordinance of baptism. This is sufficient for us; it stops all questioning: *Our master has commanded it; and it is our wisdom as well as our privilege, our duty as well as our interest, to obey.*

It will not do to say that faith is the grand requisite in this dispensation, and that therefore the sacraments are unnecessary; for *obedience to the commands of our Lord in regard to the sacraments is a part of the fruit of faith. Faith can only be exercised on the written Word.* The written Word clearly prescribes both the sacraments. It is therefore the business of faith to reverence sacramental ordinances, and to expect God's special blessing on the performance of His special command. We will make one other extract from Hooker, bearing on this part of our subject.

Means appointed by God necessary to the end

“ There are that elevate too much the ordinary and immediate means of life, relying wholly upon the bare conceit of that eternal election, which not-

ordained by Him. withstanding includeth a subordination of means, without which we are not actually brought to enjoy what God secretly did intend; and therefore to build upon God's election, if we keep not ourselves to the ways which he hath appointed for men to walk in, is but a self-deceiving vanity. When the apostle saw men called to the participation of Jesus Christ, after the Gospel of God embraced and the sacrament of life received, he feareth not then to put them in the number of elect saints (Eph. i. 1.), he then accounteth them delivered from death and clean purged from all sin, (Eph. v. 8.) Till then, notwithstanding their preordination unto life, which none could know of, saving God, what were they in the apostle's own account, but children of wrath, as well as others, plain aliens, altogether without hope, strangers, utterly without God in the present world? So that by sacraments, and other sensible tokens of grace, we may boldly gather, that He whose mercy vouchsafeth now to bestow the means, hath also long sithencé intended us that whereunto they lead. But let us never think it safe to presume of our own last end by bare conjectural collections of His first intent and purpose,

Baptism is implied as the external means in our vocation leading to the *the means failing that should come between.* Predestination bringeth not to life without the grace of external vocation, wherein our baptism is implied, (Rom. viii. 30.) For as we are not naturally men without birth, so neither are we Christian men in the eye of the

predestined church of God but by new birth; nor *end.* according to the manifest ordinary course of divine dispensation new-born (regenerated), but by that baptism which both declareth and maketh us Christians. In which respect, we justly hold it to be the door of our actual entrance into God's house, the first *apparent* beginning of life,* a seal perhaps to the grace of election before received, but to our sanctification here, a step that hath not any before it.

“There were of the old Valentinian heretics some which had knowledge in such admiration, that to it they ascribed all, and so despised the sacraments of Christ, pretending that as ignorance had made us subject to all misery, so the full redemption of the inward man, and the work of our restoration, must needs belong unto knowledge only. They draw very near unto this error, who fixing wholly their minds on the known necessity of faith,† imagine that nothing but faith is necessary for the attainment of all grace. Yet is it a branch of belief, that sacraments are *in their place* no less required than belief itself. For when our Lord and Saviour promiseth

*Sacra-
ments in
their place
as neces-
sary as*

* Ἀρχὴ μοι ζωῆς τὸ βάπτισμα. Basil. de Spir. Sanct. cap. 10.

† ‘Hic scelestissimi illi provocant quæstiones. Adeo dicunt, baptismus non est necessarius quibus fides satis est. Tertull. de Baptis. [c. 13.] ‘Huic nulla proderit fides, qui, cum possit, non percipit Sacramentum.’ Bern. Epist. lxx. ad Hugon.

even faith itself. eternal life, is it any otherwise than as

He promised restitution of health unto Naaman the Syrian, namely with this condition, "Wash, and be clean?" (2 Kings, v. 14.) or, as to them which were stung of serpents, health, by beholding the Brazen Serpent? (Num. xxi. 8.) If Christ himself which giveth salvation do *require baptism*; (Mark xvi. 16.) it is not for us that look for salvation to *sound and examine him*, whether unbaptized men may be saved; but seriously to do that which is required, and religiously to fear the danger which may grow by the want thereof. Had Christ only declared his will to have all men baptized, and not acquainted us with any cause why baptism is necessary, our ignorance in the reason of that he enjoineth might perhaps have hindered somewhat the forwardness of our obedience thereunto; whereas now being taught that baptism is (generally)

Baptism generally necessary to salvation necessary to take away sin, how have we the fear of God in our hearts, if care of delivering men's souls from sin —Church do not move us to use all means for Catechism. their baptism? Pelagius,* which denied utterly the guilt of original sin, and in that respect the necessity of baptism, did notwithstanding, both baptize infants, and acknowledge their baptism necessary for entrance into the kingdom of God. Now the law of Christ, which in these considerations maketh baptism

* 'Pelagius asserere arrepta impietate præsumit non propter vitam, sed propter regnum cœlorum baptismum parvulis conferendum.' Euseb. Emis. Hom. v. de Pasch. [t. v. par. 1. p. 560.]

necessary, must be construed and understood according to rules of natural equity.* Which rules if they themselves did not follow in expounding the law of God, would they ever be able to prove, that the scripture, saying, "Who-so believeth not the Gospel of Christ, is condemned already," (T. C. 1. i. p. 143,) meaneth this sentence of those which can hear the Gospel, and have discretion when they hear, to understand it; neither ought it to be applied unto infants, deaf men, and fools? That which teacheth them thus to interpret the law of Christ, is natural equity. And (because equity so

Outward baptism not always indispensable. teacheth) it is on all parts gladly confessed, that there may be in divers cases life by virtue of inward baptism, even where outward is not found. So

that if any question be made, it is but about the bounds and limits of this possibility. For example, to think that a man whose baptism the crown of martyrdom preventeth, doth lose in that case the happiness which so many thousands enjoy, that only have had the grace to believe, and not the honour to seal the testimony thereof with death, were almost barbarous."

Of infants dying without baptism. "Touching infants which die unbaptized, sith they neither have this sacrament itself, nor any sense or conceit thereof, the judgment of many hath

gone hard against them. But yet seeing *grace is not absolutely tied unto sacraments*; and be-

* 'Benignius leges interpretandæ sunt, quo voluntas earum' conservetur.' L. Benign. D. de Legib. et Sera. Tusc.

sides, such is the lenity of God, that unto things altogether impossible he bindeth no man; but, where we cannot do what is enjoined us, accepteth our will to do instead of the deed itself; again, for as much as there is in their Christian

Desire for their baptism presumed in their parents. parents, and in the church of God, a presumed desire, that the sacrament of baptism might be given them, yea, a purpose also that it shall be given: remorse of equity hath moved divers of the school-divines* in these considerations, ingenuously to grant, that God, all merciful to such as are not in themselves able to desire baptism, imputeth the secret desire that others have in their behalf, and accepteth the same as theirs, rather than casteth away their souls for that which no man is able to help. And of the will of God to impart His grace unto infants without baptism in that case, the very circumstance of their natural birth may serve as a just argument; whereupon it is not to be misliked, that men in charitable presumption do gather a great likelihood of their salvation, to whom the benefit of

Christian parentage gives to infants the right to baptism. Christian parentage being given, the rest that should follow is prevented by some such casualty, as man hath himself no power to avoid. For we are plainly taught of God, that the seed of faithful parentage is holy from the very birth. Which albeit we may not so understand, as if

* Gers. Serm. in Nativit. Beatæ Mar. [consid. 2.] Cajetan. in 3. Tho. ix. 68. Art. 1. et 2. Biel. in 4. Senten. d. 4. q. 2. Tilman. Segeberg. de Sacr. cap. 1. Elisius Neapol. in Clyp. advers. Hæres. cap. de Baptis.

the children of believing parents were without sin; or grace from baptized parents derived by propagation; or God, by covenant and promise, tied to save any in mere regard of their parents' belief: yet seeing, that to all professors of the name of Christ this pre-eminence above infidels is freely given, that fruit of their bodies bringeth into the world with it a *present* interest and *right* to those means wherewith the ordinance of Christ is that His church shall be sanctified, it is not to be thought that He which, as it were, from heaven, hath nominated and designed them unto holiness by special privilege of their very birth, will Himself deprive them of regene-

*Inward
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tized.*

ration and inward grace, only because necessity depriveth them of outward sacraments. In which case, it were the part of charity to hope, and to make men rather partial than cruel judges, if we had not those fair appearances which here we have. Wherefore a necessity there is of receiving, and a necessity of administering, the sacrament of baptism; the one peradventure *not so absolute as some have thought*, but out of all peradventure the other more strait and narrow than that the church, which is by office a mother unto such as crave at her hands the sacred mystery of their new birth, should repel them, and see them die unsatisfied of these their ghostly desires, rather than give them their souls' rights with omission of those things which serve but only for the more convenient and orderly administration thereof."

The arguments in the extracts which we have just given are further strengthened in Hooker's view by noticing the inferior degree of precision with which the rules for baptism are set down, when compared with those for circumcision.

Baptism is the child's right as soon as born. “ We have for baptism no day set, as the Jews had for circumcision; neither have we by the law of God, but only by the church's discretion, a place thereunto appointed. Baptism, therefore, even in the meaning of the law of Christ, belongeth unto infants capable thereof from the very instant of their birth.* Which if they have not howsoever, rather than lose it by being put off because the time, the place, or some such like circumstance doth not solemnly enough concur, the church, as much as in her lieth, wilfully casteth not away their souls.”

In all these enquiries it should ever be remembered that the sacraments are only channels of grace. If we wish the *full and rich benefits* of the sacrament of baptism for our child, we

The full blessings of baptism are to faith. We must bring him to baptism in faith. We must see God in His own ordinance. “ The manner,” says Hooker, “ of the necessity of the sacraments to life supernatural, is not in all respects as food unto natural life, because they contain in themselves no vital force or efficacy; they are not physical, but moral instruments

* ‘ In omnibus obligationibus, in quibus dies non ponitur, præsentī die debetur.’ Lib. xiv. D. de Reg. Jur.

of salvation, duties of service and worship; which unless we perform as the Author of Grace requireth, they are unprofitable: for, *all receive not the grace of God, which receive the sacraments of His grace.* Neither is it ordinarily His will to bestow the grace of sacraments on any but by the sacraments; which grace also, they that receive by sacraments or with sacraments, receive it *from Him, and not from them.* For of sacraments, the very same is true which Solomon's wisdom observeth in the Brazen Serpent,* "He that turned towards it, was not healed by the thing he saw, but by Thee, O Saviour of all," (Wisd. xvi. 7.) This is therefore the necessity of sacraments. That saving grace which Christ originally is, or hath for the general good of his whole church, by sacraments he severally deriveth into every member thereof. Sacraments serve as the instruments of God, to that end and purpose; moral instruments, the use whereof is in our own hands, the effect in His; for the use we have His express commandment, for the effect His conditional promise: so that without our obedience to the one, there is of the other no apparent assurance; as contrariwise, *where the signs and sacraments of His grace are not either through contempt unreceived, or received with contempt, we are not to doubt, but that they really give what they promise, and are what they*

* ' Spiritus Sancti munus est gratiam implere mysterii.' Ambros. in Luc. cap. iii. (1. ii. § 79.) ' Sanctificatis elementis effectum non propria ipsorum natura præbet, sed virtus divina potentius operatur. Cypr. de Chrism. (c. 2.)

signify. For we *take not* baptism, nor the eucharist, for *bare resemblances or memorials* of things absent, neither for *naked signs and testimonies* assuring us of grace received before, *but* (as they are indeed and in verity), for *means effectual*, whereby God, when we take the sacraments, delivereth into our hands that grace available unto eternal life, which grace the sacraments represent or signify.* This most undoubtedly is the feeling with which the true Christian would himself receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and with which too he would bring his child to baptism.

Hooker grants the sacraments to be "bonds of obedience, memorials of heavenly benefits, ordinances for ever annexed to the new dispensation, warrants for the greater security of our belief and marks of our profession," but chiefly he insists upon their being "sanctified ordinances." His language runs perhaps deeper than we can exactly follow, but we believe that it would be difficult to set limits to the expectations which we may reasonably and scripturally form of the blessings which are to be derived from them.

The large blessings which A father and a mother should carry their infant with swelling hearts to the baptismal font. They should pray for

* 'Dum homini bonum invisibile redditur, foris ei ejusdem significatio per species visibiles adhibetur, ut foris excitetur et intus reparetur. In ipsa vasis specie virtus exprimitur medicinæ.' Hugo de Sacram. lib. i. cap. 3. 'Si ergo vasa sunt spiritualis gratiæ Sacramenta, non ex suo sanant, quia vasa ægrotum non curant, sed medicina.' Idem, lib. i. cap. 4.

parents may expect. and in faith expect the power of the Holy Spirit. They should not be content merely with those blessings which we believe, and which we have asserted that scripture warrants us in believing, to be sealed to every baptized infant, (viz.,) the remission of original sin, God's adoption and the aid of the Holy Spirit,—they should expect more, they should ask for more. They should pray that the work of renovation may at once commence, that it may grow with the growth and more than strengthen with the strength of the child, that it may overpower rising corruption, extinguish the flames of unlawful desire, quell bad passions, and dwell constantly in their little one, making a home of its bosom. and a church of its heart.

Peculiar influence of the Holy Spirit. “There are gales of the spirit,” says the late eminent Robert Hall, and if these gales may be expected to rise and to blow with peculiar force and peculiar sweetness, at any special time, most surely we cannot be wrong in looking for them at that most sacred and most interesting of all seasons, when parents bring their child to put it into the Redeemer's arms to be sealed with his own red seal of covenant love. For over that sacred scene the deepest feelings of the human soul and the richest blessings of Heaven's mercy seem to join their hands. He who calls himself our Father in heaven, has a peculiar sympathy with that father and mother. As the father of prodigals He is there receiving back to his bosom prodigal child, running a great way out in the ordinance of his grace to meet him, giving him

the kiss of forgiveness and the ring of privileged union. All, as has been said above, is love and grace on God's part; the parent should pray that the seeds of repentance and gratitude and of the *spirit* of adoption should be sown in the child, so that he on his part, may return love for love.

Such prayers cannot be thrown away—nay, more, we may add that such prayers persevered in cannot but be answered. If Augustin was given to the fervent prayers of his mother Monica; if the faith of his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice, descended through the reading of the scriptures and prayer, as a kind of inheritance to Timothy, most surely every parent may look for and may confidently expect similar blessings. The promise, moreover, is sure, to parents—“train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Most certainly this text is a rock of strength and support for a parent. “According to their faith shall it be done unto them.” He that prescribes the end appoints the means. Man must not act upon God's secret purposes, but upon his declared commands. He must put his trust and build his faith on the promises, confidently expecting their fulfilment. This is the way in which the piety of parents may become the inheritance of their children, descending through the waters of baptism, and the influence of the Holy Ghost in education, daily renewed because daily prayed for and expected, to generation after generation.



NOTE

Which should have been inserted at page 75, in the Third Part, where Sponsors are represented as Spiritual Nurses.

“ It is perhaps not irrelevant to the subject to introduce in this place an observation respecting proxies in baptism. It will be seen that the office of a sponsor is two-fold: he answers for the child or is the child’s voice, and he is also the guarantee to the church and congregation for the Christian education of the child. It will be seen from a consideration of this his twofold character, that a proxy cannot rightly fulfil by his presence at the ordinance the part of his principal (*i.e.*) of the sponsor represented by him. He may be the voice of the child, but by being so he must remember that he becomes *pro tanto* the child’s sponsor; but he cannot be the guarantee which the church requires for the Christian education of the child.*

The action of the officiating clergyman, when he has baptized the child, very beautifully and significantly indicates the view of the church. He receives the child from the arms of the nurse into his own, but he returns it into the arms of one of the sponsors. The nurse is the representative of the natural state, he himself, as Christ’s minister, represents his Master, and the sponsors represent the church. The truth symbolized is, therefore, the beautiful and affecting truth that Christ, in baptism, takes the child out of the tutelage of nature and puts it into the guidance of His church—His own blessed Spirit enabling the church to discharge the sacred office of a new and spiritual mother.

But if this be so, two conclusions result necessarily from

* The Members of the House of Lords, can vote by proxy, because they are principals. The members of the other House cannot, because they are representatives. The true principal in baptism is the infant: the sponsor is his representative; it is therefore impossible by this rule that he who represents another can be himself represented by his proxy, so as to keep still his character: the proxy in fact becomes the sponsor.

it: the one is the *importance of the character of the sponsors, and the other is the difficulty of any proxy's rightly performing the office.* We say *the difficulty*, because we believe that there is one way in which it may be met; we do not in truth think it impossible that a proxy may discharge the duty of his principal at the baptism, although it is evident that the church no where contemplates such a character as the proxy. The way in which we think it possible that the character may be sustained is by a declaration at the baptism of the name of the real sponsor, and of his expressed willingness to perform all the sponsors duties. The church is by this method put in possession of that which she desires to be informed of, the character of the sponsor, and his capability of rightly performing the office.

We cannot, however, help cautioning Christians against the general use of proxies, and indeed adding a word of caution also in regard to the choice of sponsors. The office should not be made—it is in truth an unholy perversion to make it a matter of compliment and family courtesey. It were far better in all cases to take some godly friend or neighbour who might rightly perform the afterpart of the duties attached to it, than to call in any relative on whose constant prayer for the infant reliance could not be placed. If our views, which we believe to be the view of the church—be right, that the Holy Spirit's influence (the right of the Christian child by Christian parentage, and of the heathen foundling by God's general love in Christ) be sealed and ratified in in baptism—then it is impossible too highly to rate the importance of a daily application, both by parents and sponsors, to that blessed Guardian for His sacred guidance and influence. But such application no careless sponsor, however tenderly attached by natural ties to the parents and family of the infant, can possibly make. It is, we must add, a most lamentable thing, to see Christians prostituting their principles and sacrificing the dearest interests of their children, either to family considerations or to a desire to establish an interest for them with persons of rank and consequence, by inviting them to fulfil the high and responsible office of sponsors to them.

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